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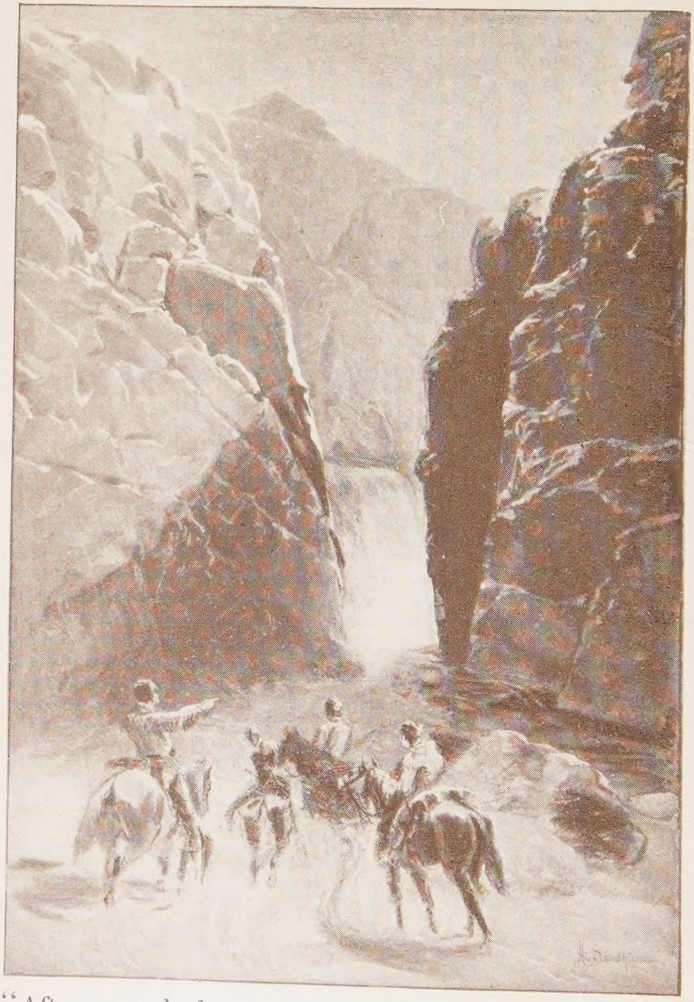
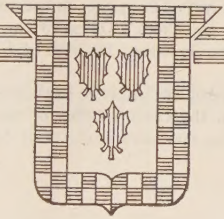


"After several days' travel he came to a part of the river which filled him with astonishment and admiration" (Captain Bonneville).

From the Drawing by Henry Sandham

THE NEW HUDSON EDITION



THE WORKS OF

WASHINGTON IRVING

VOLUME SIX

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE

TALES OF A TRAVELLER

P·F·COLLIER·&·SON
NEW YORK

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1868, by G. P. Putnam
and Son, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court
for the Southern District of New York

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Introductory Notice.

WHILE engaged in writing an account of the grand enterprise of Astoria, it was my practice to seek all kinds of oral information connected with the subject. Nowhere did I pick up more interesting particulars than at the table of Mr. John Jacob Astor; who, being the patriarch of the Fur Trade in the United States, was accustomed to have at his board various persons of adventurous turn, some of whom had been engaged in his own great undertaking; others, on their own account, had made expeditions to the Rocky Mountains and the waters of the Columbia.

Among these personages, one who peculiarly took my fancy, was Captain Bonneville, of the United States army; who, in a rambling kind of enterprise, had strangely ingrafted the trapper and hunter upon the soldier. As his expeditions and adventures will form the leading

theme of the following pages, a few biographical particulars concerning him may not be unacceptable.

Captain Bonneville is of French parentage. His father was a worthy old emigrant, who came to this country many years since, and took up his abode in New York. He is represented as a man not much calculated for the sordid struggle of a money-making world, but possessed of a happy temperament, a festivity of imagination, and a simplicity of heart, that made him proof against its rubs and trials. He was an excellent scholar; well acquainted with Latin and Greek, and fond of the modern classics. His book was his elysium; once immersed in the pages of Voltaire, Corneille, or Racine, or of his favorite English author, Shakespeare, he forgot the world and all its concerns. Often would he be seen in summer weather, seated under one of the trees on the Battery, or the portico of St. Paul's Church in Broadway, his bald head uncovered, his hat lying by his side, his eyes riveted to the page of his book, and his whole soul so engaged, as to lose all consciousness of the passing throng or the passing hour.

Captain Bonneville, it will be found, inherited something of his father's *bonhomie*, and his excitable imagination; though the latter was somewhat disciplined in early years, by mathematical studies. He was educated at our national military Academy at West Point, where he acquitted himself very creditably; thence,

he entered the army, in which he has ever since continued.

The nature of our military service took him to the frontier, where, for a number of years, he was stationed at various posts in the Far West. Here he was brought into frequent intercourse with Indian traders, mountain trappers, and other pioneers of the wilderness; and became so excited by their tales of wild scenes and wild adventures, and their accounts of vast and magnificent regions as yet unexplored, that an expedition to the Rocky Mountains became the ardent desire of his heart, and an enterprise to explore untrodden tracts, the leading object of his ambition.

By degrees he shaped this vague day-dream into a practical reality. Having made himself acquainted with all the requisites for a trading enterprise beyond the mountains, he determined to undertake it. A leave of absence, and a sanction of his expedition, was obtained from the major-general in chief, on his offering to combine public utility with his private projects, and to collect statistical information for the War Department, concerning the wild countries and wild tribes he might visit in the course of his journeyings.

Nothing now was wanting to the darling project of the captain, but the ways and means. The expedition would require an outfit of many thousand dollars; a staggering obstacle to a soldier, whose capital is seldom anything more than his sword. Full of that buoyant hope, how-

ever, which belongs to the sanguine temperament, he repaired to New York, the great focus of American enterprise, where there are always funds ready for any scheme, however chimerical or romantic. Here he had the good fortune to meet with a gentleman of high respectability and influence, who had been his associate in boyhood, and who cherished a school-fellow friendship for him. He took a general interest in the scheme of the captain; introduced him to commercial men of his acquaintance, and in a little while an association was formed, and the necessary funds were raised to carry the proposed measure into effect. One of the most efficient persons in this association was Mr. Alfred Seton, who, when quite a youth, had accompanied one of the expeditions sent out by Mr. Astor to his commercial establishments on the Columbia, and had distinguished himself by his activity and courage at one of the interior posts. Mr. Seton was one of the American youths who were at Astoria at the time of its surrender to the British, and who manifested such grief and indignation at seeing the flag of their country hauled down. The hope of seeing that flag once more planted on the shores of the Columbia, may have entered into his motives for engaging in the present enterprise.

Thus backed and provided, Captain Bonneville undertook his expedition into the Far West, and was soon beyond the Rocky Mountains. Year after year elapsed without his return. The term of his leave of

absence expired, yet no report was made of him at head-quarters at Washington. He was considered virtually dead or lost, and his name was stricken from the army list.

It was in the autumn of 1835, at the country seat of Mr. John Jacob Astor, at Hellgate, that I first met with Captain Bonneville. He was then just returned from a residence of upwards of three years among the mountains, and was on his way to report himself at head-quarters, in the hopes of being reinstated in the service. From all that I could learn, his wanderings in the wilderness, though they had gratified his curiosity and his love of adventure, had not much benefited his fortunes. Like Corporal Trim in his campaigns, he had "satisfied the sentiment," and that was all. In fact, he was too much of the frank, free-hearted soldier, and had inherited too much of his father's temperament, to make a scheming trapper, or a thrifty bargainer. There was something in the whole appearance of the captain that prepossessed me in his favor. He was of the middle size, well made and well set; and a military frock of foreign cut, that had seen service, gave him a look of compactness. His countenance was frank, open, and engaging; well browned by the sun, and had something of a French expression. He had a pleasant black eye, a high forehead, and while he kept his hat on, the look of a man in the jocund prime of his days; but the moment his head was uncovered, a bald crown gained

him credit for a few more years than he was really entitled to.

Being extremely curious, at the time, about everything connected with the Far West, I addressed numerous questions to him. They drew from him a number of extremely striking details, which were given with mingled modesty and frankness; and in a gentleness of manner, and a soft tone of voice, contrasting singularly with the wild and often startling nature of his themes. It was difficult to conceive the mild, quiet-looking personage before you, the actual hero of the stirring scenes related.

In the course of three or four months, happening to be at the city of Washington, I again came upon the captain, who was attending the slow adjustment of his affairs with the War Department. I found him quartered with a worthy brother in arms, a major in the army. Here he was writing at a table, covered with maps and papers, in the centre of a large barrack room, fancifully decorated with Indian arms, and trophies, and war dresses, and the skins of various wild animals, and hung round with pictures of Indian games and ceremonies, and scenes of war and hunting. In a word, the captain was beguiling the tediousness of attendance at court, by an attempt at authorship; and was rewriting and extending his travelling notes, and making maps of the regions he had explored. As he sat at the table, in this curious apartment, with his high bald head of somewhat

foreign cast, he reminded me of some of those antique pictures of authors that I have seen in old Spanish volumes.

The result of his labors was a mass of manuscript, which he subsequently put at my disposal, to fit it for publication and bring it before the world. I found it full of interesting details of life among the mountains, and of the singular castes and races, both white men and red men, among whom he had sojourned. It bore, too, throughout, the impress of his character, his *bonhomie*, his kindliness of spirit, and his susceptibility to the grand and beautiful.

That manuscript has formed the staple of the following work. I have occasionally interwoven facts and details, gathered from various sources, especially from the conversations and journals of some of the captain's contemporaries, who were actors in the scenes he describes. I have also given it a tone and coloring drawn from my own observation, during an excursion into the Indian country beyond the bounds of civilization; as I before observed, however, the work is substantially the narrative of the worthy captain, and many of its most graphic passages are but little varied from his own language.

I shall conclude this notice by a dedication which he had made of his manuscript to his hospitable brother in arms, in whose quarters I found him occupied in his literary labors; it is a dedication which, I believe, pos-

sesses the qualities, not always found in complimentary documents of the kind, of being sincere, and being merited.

TO

JAMES HARVEY HOOK,

MAJOR, U. S. A.,

WHOSE JEALOUSY OF ITS HONOR,

WHOSE ANXIETY FOR ITS INTERESTS,

AND

WHOSE SENSIBILITY FOR ITS WANTS,

HAVE ENDEARED HIM TO THE SERVICE AS

The Soldier's Friend;

AND WHOSE GENERAL AMENITY, CONSTANT CHEERFULNESS,

DISINTERESTED HOSPITALITY, AND UNWEARIED

BENEVOLENCE, ENTITLE HIM TO THE

STILL LOFTIER TITLE OF

THE FRIEND OF MAN,

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

ETC.

New York, 1843.

ADVENTURES

OF

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE.

CHAPTER I.

STATE OF THE FUR TRADE OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.—AMERICAN ENTERPRISES.—GENERAL ASHLEY AND HIS ASSOCIATES.—SUBLETTE, A FAMOUS LEADER.—YEARLY RENDEZVOUS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.—STRATAGEMS AND DANGERS OF THE TRADE.—BANDS OF TRAPPERS.—INDIAN BANDITTI.—CROWS AND BLACKFEET.—MOUNTAINEERS.—TRADERS OF THE FAR WEST.—CHARACTER AND HABITS OF THE TRAPPER.

IN a recent work we have given an account of the grand enterprise of Mr. John Jacob Astor, to establish an American emporium for the fur trade at the mouth of the Columbia, or Oregon River; of the failure of that enterprise through the capture of Astoria by the British, in 1814; and of the way in which the control of the trade of the Columbia and its dependencies fell into the hands of the North-west Company. We have stated, likewise, the unfortunate supineness of

the American government, in neglecting the application of Mr. Astor for the protection of the American flag, and a small military force, to enable him to reinstate himself in the possession of Astoria at the return of peace; when the post was formally given up by the British government, though still occupied by the North-west Company. By that supineness the sovereignty in the country has been virtually lost to the United States; and it will cost both governments much trouble and difficulty to settle matters on that just and rightful footing, on which they would readily have been placed, had the proposition of Mr. Astor been attended to. We shall now state a few particulars of subsequent events, so as to lead the reader up to the period of which we are about to treat, and to prepare him for the circumstances of our narrative.

In consequence of the apathy and neglect of the American government, Mr. Astor abandoned all thoughts of regaining Astoria, and made no further attempt to extend his enterprises beyond the Rocky Mountains; and the North-west Company considered themselves the lords of the country. They did not long enjoy unmolested the sway which they had somewhat surreptitiously attained. A fierce competition ensued between them and their old rivals, the Hudson's Bay Company; which was carried on at great cost and sacrifice, and occasionally with the loss of life. It ended in the ruin of most of the partners of the North-west Company; and the merging of the relics of that establishment, in 1821, in the rival as-

sociation. From that time, the Hudson's Bay Company enjoyed a monopoly of the Indian trade from the coast of the Pacific to the Rocky Mountains, and for a considerable extent north and south. They removed their emporium from Astoria to Fort Vancouver, a strong post on the left bank of the Columbia River, about sixty miles from its mouth; whence they furnished their interior posts, and sent forth their brigades of trappers.

The Rocky Mountains formed a vast barrier between them and the United States, and their stern and awful defiles, their rugged valleys, and the great western plains watered by their rivers, remained almost a terra incognita to the American trapper. The difficulties experienced in 1808, by Mr. Henry of the Missouri Company, the first American who trapped upon the head-waters of the Columbia; and the frightful hardships sustained by Wilson P. Hunt, Ramsay Crooks, Robert Stuart, and other intrepid Astorians, in their ill-fated expeditions across the mountains, appeared for a time to check all further enterprise in that direction. The American traders contented themselves with following up the head branches of the Missouri, the Yellowstone, and other rivers and streams on the Atlantic side of the mountains, but forbore to attempt those great snow-crowned sierras.

One of the first to revive these tramontane expeditions was General Ashley, of Missouri, a man whose courage and achievements in the prosecution of his enterprises, have rendered him famous in the Far West. In conjunc-

tion with Mr. Henry, already mentioned, he established a post on the banks of the Yellowstone River, in 1822, and in the following year pushed a resolute band of trappers across the mountains to the banks of the Green River or Colorado of the West, often known by the Indian name of the Seeds-ke-dee Agie.* This attempt was followed up and sustained by others, until in 1825 a footing was secured, and a complete system of trapping organized beyond the mountains.

It is difficult to do justice to the courage, fortitude, and perseverance of the pioneers of the fur trade, who conducted these early expeditions, and first broke their way through a wilderness where everything was calculated to deter and dismay them. They had to traverse the most dreary and desolate mountains, and barren and trackless wastes, uninhabited by man, or occasionally infested by predatory and cruel savages. They knew nothing of the country beyond the verge of their horizon, and had to gather information as they wandered. They beheld volcanic plains stretching around them, and ranges of mountains piled up to the clouds, and glistening with eternal frost: but knew nothing of their defiles, nor how they were to be penetrated or traversed. They launched themselves in frail canoes on rivers, without knowing whither their swift currents would carry them, or what rocks, and shoals, and rapids, they might en-

* *i. e.* The Prairie Hen River. Agie in the Crow language signifies river.

counter in their course. They had to be continually on the alert, too, against the mountain tribes, who beset every defile, laid ambuscades in their path, or attacked them in their night encampments; so that, of the hardy bands of trappers that first entered into these regions, three fifths are said to have fallen by the hands of savage foes.

In this wild and warlike school a number of leaders have sprung up, originally in the employ, subsequently partners of Ashley; among these we may mention Smith, Fitzpatrick, Bridger, Robert Campbell, and William Sublette; whose adventures and exploits partake of the wildest spirit of romance. The association commenced by General Ashley underwent various modifications. That gentleman having acquired sufficient fortune, sold out his interest and retired; and the leading spirit that succeeded him was Captain William Sublette; a man worthy of note, as his name has become renowned in frontier story. He is a native of Kentucky, and of game descent; his maternal grandfather, Colonel Wheatley, a companion of Boon, having been one of the pioneers of the West, celebrated in Indian warfare, and killed in one of the contests of the "Bloody Ground." We shall frequently have occasion to speak of this Sublette, and always to the credit of his game qualities. In 1830, the association took the name of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, of which Captain Sublette and Robert Campbell were prominent members.

In the meantime, the success of this company attracted the attention and excited the emulation of the American Fur Company, and brought them once more into the field of their ancient enterprise. Mr. Astor, the founder of the association, had retired from busy life, and the concerns of the company were ably managed by Mr. Ramsay Crooks, of Snake River renown, who still officiates as its president. A competition immediately ensued between the two companies, for the trade with the mountain tribes, and the trapping of the head-waters of the Columbia, and the other great tributaries of the Pacific. Beside the regular operations of these formidable rivals, there have been from time to time desultory enterprises, or rather experiments, of minor associations, or of adventurous individuals, beside roving bands of independent trappers, who either hunt for themselves, or engage for a single season, in the service of one or other of the main companies.

The consequence is, that the Rocky Mountains and the ulterior regions, from the Russian possessions in the north, down to the Spanish settlements of California, have been traversed and ransacked in every direction by bands of hunters and Indian traders; so that there is scarcely a mountain pass, or defile, that is not known and threaded in their restless migrations, nor a nameless stream that is not haunted by the lonely trapper.

The American fur companies keep no established post beyond the mountains. Everything there is regulated

by resident partners; that is to say, partners who reside in the tramontane country, but who move about from place to place, either with Indian tribes, whose traffic they wish to monopolize, or with main bodies of their own men, whom they employ in trading and trapping. In the meantime, they detach bands, or "brigades" as they are termed, of trappers in various directions, assigning to each a portion of country as a hunting, or trapping ground. In the months of June and July, when there is an interval between the hunting seasons, a general rendezvous is held, at some designated place in the mountains, where the affairs of the past year are settled by the resident partners, and the plans for the following year arranged.

To this rendezvous repair the various brigades of trappers from their widely separated hunting grounds, bringing in the products of their year's campaign. Hither also repair the Indian tribes accustomed to traffic their peltries with the company. Bands of free trappers resort hither also, to sell the furs they have collected; or to engage their services for the next hunting season.

To this rendezvous the company sends annually a convoy of supplies from its establishment on the Atlantic frontier, under the guidance of some experienced partner or officer. On the arrival of this convoy, the resident partner at the rendezvous depends, to set all his next year's machinery in motion.

Now as the rival companies keep a vigilant eye upon

each other, and are anxious to discover each other's plans and movements, they generally contrive to hold their annual assemblages at no great distance apart. An eager competition exists also between their respective convoys of supplies, which shall first reach its place of rendezvous. For this purpose, they set off with the first appearance of grass on the Atlantic frontier, and push with all diligence for the mountains. The company that can first open its tempting supplies of coffee, tobacco, ammunition, scarlet cloth, blankets, bright shawls, and glittering trinkets, has the greatest chance to get all the peltries and furs of the Indians and free trappers, and to engage their services for the next season. It is able, also, to fit out and dispatch its own trappers the soonest, so as to get the start of its competitors, and to have the first dash into the hunting and trapping grounds.

A new species of strategy has sprung out of this hunting and trapping competition. The constant study of the rival bands is to forestall and outwit each other; to supplant each other in the good-will and custom of the Indian tribes; to cross each other's plans; to mislead each other as to routes; in a word, next to his own advantage, the study of the Indian trader is the disadvantage of his competitor.

The influx of this wandering trade has had its effects on the habits of the mountain tribes. They have found the trapping of the beaver their most profitable spe-

cies of hunting; and the traffic with the white man has opened to them sources of luxury of which they previously had no idea. The introduction of fire-arms has rendered them more successful hunters, but at the same time more formidable foes; some of them, incorrigibly savage and warlike in their nature, have found the expeditions of the fur traders grand objects of profitable adventure. To waylay and harass a band of trappers with their pack-horses, when embarrassed in the rugged defiles of the mountains, has become as favorite an exploit with these Indians as the plunder of a caravan to the Arab of the desert. The Crows and Blackfeet, who were such terrors in the path of the early adventurers to Astoria, still continue their predatory habits, but seem to have brought them to greater system. They know the routes and resorts of the trappers; where to waylay them on their journeys; where to find them in the hunting seasons, and where to hover about them in winter quarters. The life of a trapper, therefore, is a perpetual state militant, and he must sleep with his weapons in his hands.

A new order of trappers and traders, also, have grown out of this system of things. In the old times of the great North-west Company, when the trade in furs was pursued chiefly about the lakes and rivers, the expeditions were carried on in batteaux and canoes. The voyageurs or boatmen were the rank and file in the service of the trader, and even the hardy "men of the north," those

great rufflers and game birds, were fain to be paddled from point to point of their migrations.

A totally different class has now sprung up;—"the Mountaineers," the traders and trappers that scale the vast mountain chains, and pursue their hazardous vocations amidst their wild recesses. They move from place to place on horseback. The equestrian exercises, therefore, in which they are engaged, the nature of the countries they traverse, vast plains and mountains, pure and exhilarating in atmospheric qualities, seem to make them physically and mentally a more lively and mercurial race than the fur traders and trappers of former days, the self-vaunting "men of the north." A man who bestrides a horse, must be essentially different from a man who cowers in a canoe. We find them, accordingly, hardy, lithe, vigorous, and active; extravagant in word, in thought, and deed; heedless of hardship; daring of danger; prodigal of the present, and thoughtless of the future.

A difference is to be perceived even between these mountain hunters and those of the lower regions along the waters of the Missouri. The latter, generally French creoles, live comfortably in cabins and log-huts, well sheltered from the inclemencies of the seasons. They are within the reach of frequent supplies from the settlements; their life is comparatively free from danger, and from most of the vicissitudes of the upper wilderness. The consequence is, that they are less hardy, self-dependent and game-spirited, than the mountaineer. If

the latter by chance comes among them on his way to and from the settlements, he is like a game-cock among the common roosters of the poultry-yard. Accustomed to live in tents, or to bivouac in the open air, he despises the comforts and is impatient of the confinement of the log-house. If his meal is not ready in season, he takes his rifle, hies to the forest or prairie, shoots his own game, lights his fire, and cooks his repast. With his horse and his rifle, he is independent of the world, and spurns at all its restraints. The very superintendents at the lower posts will not put him to mess with the common men, the hirelings of the establishment, but treat him as something superior.

There is, perhaps, no class of men on the face of the earth, says Captain Bonneville, who lead a life of more continued exertion, peril, and excitement, and who are more enamored of their occupations, than the free trappers of the West. No toil, no danger, no privation can turn the trapper from his pursuit. His passionate excitement at times resembles a mania. In vain may the most vigilant and cruel savages beset his path; in vain may rocks, and precipices, and wintry torrents oppose his progress; let but a single track of a beaver meet his eye, and he forgets all dangers and defies all difficulties. At times, he may be seen with his traps on his shoulder, buffeting his way across rapid streams, amidst floating blocks of ice: at other times, he is to be found with his traps swung on his back clambering the most rugged

mountains, scaling or descending the most frighful precipices, searching, by routes inaccessible to the horse, and never before trodden by white man, for springs and lakes unknown to his comrades, and where he may meet with his favorite game. Such is the mountaineer, the hardy trapper of the West; and such, as we have slightly sketched it, is the wild, Robin Hood kind of life, with all its strange and motley populace, now existing in full vigor among the Rocky Mountains.

Having thus given the reader some idea of the actual state of the fur trade in the interior of our vast continent, and made him acquainted with the wild chivalry of the mountains, we will no longer delay the introduction of Captain Bonneville and his band into this field of their enterprise, but launch them at once upon the perilous plains of the Far West.

CHAPTER II.

DEPARTURE FROM FORT OSAGE.—MODES OF TRANSPORTATION.—PACK-HORSES.—WAGONS.—WALKER AND CERRÉ; THEIR CHARACTERS.—BUOYANT FEELINGS ON LAUNCHING UPON THE PRAIRIES.—WILD EQUIPMENTS OF THE TRAPPERS.—THEIR GAMBOLS AND ANTICS.—DIFFERENCE OF CHARACTER BETWEEN THE AMERICAN AND FRENCH TRAPPERS.—AGENCY OF THE KANSAS.—GENERAL CLARKE.—WHITE PLUME, THE KANSAS CHIEF.—NIGHT SCENE IN A TRADER'S CAMP.—COLLOQUY BETWEEN WHITE PLUME AND THE CAPTAIN.—BEE-HUNTERS.—THEIR EXPEDITIONS.—THEIR FEUDS WITH THE INDIANS.—BARGAINING TALENT OF WHITE PLUME.

IT was on the first of May, 1832, that Captain Bonneville took his departure from the frontier post of Fort Osage, on the Missouri. He had enlisted a party of one hundred and ten men, most of whom had been in the Indian country, and some of whom were experienced hunters and trappers. Fort Osage, and other places on the borders of the western wilderness, abound with characters of the kind, ready for any expedition.

The ordinary mode of transportation in these great inland expeditions of the fur traders is on mules and pack-horses; but Captain Bonneville substituted wagons. Though he was to travel through a trackless wilderness, yet the greater part of his route would lie across open

plains, destitute of forests, and where wheel carriages can pass in every direction. The chief difficulty occurs in passing the deep ravines cut through the prairies by streams and winter torrents. Here it is often necessary to dig a road down the banks, and to make bridges for the wagons.

In transporting his baggage in vehicles of this kind, Captain Bonneville thought he would save the great delay caused every morning by packing the horses, and the labor of unpacking in the evening. Fewer horses also would be required, and less risk incurred of their wandering away, or being frightened or carried off by the Indians. The wagons, also, would be more easily defended, and might form a kind of fortification in case of attack in the open prairies. A train of twenty wagons, drawn by oxen, or by four mules or horses each, and laden with merchandise, ammunition, and provisions, were disposed in two columns in the centre of the party, which was equally divided into a van and a rear-guard. As sub-leaders or lieutenants in his expedition, Captain Bonneville had made choice of Mr. I. R. Walker and Mr. M. S. Cerré. The former was a native of Tennessee, about six feet high, strong built, dark complexioned, brave in spirit, though mild in manners. He had resided for many years in Missouri, on the frontier; had been among the earliest adventurers to Santa Fé, where he went to trap beaver, and was taken by the Spaniards. Being liberated, he engaged with the Spaniards and

Sioux Indians in a war against the Pawnees; then returned to Missouri, and had acted by turns as sheriff, trader, trapper, until he was enlisted as a leader by Captain Bonneville.

Cerré, his other leader, had likewise been in expeditions to Santa Fé, in which he had endured much hardship. He was of the middle size, light complexioned, and though but about twenty-five years of age, was considered an experienced Indian trader. It was a great object with Captain Bonneville to get to the mountains before the summer heats and summer flies should render the travelling across the prairies distressing; and before the annual assemblages of people connected with the fur trade, should have broken up, and dispersed to the hunting grounds.

The two rival associations already mentioned, the American Fur Company and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, had their several places of rendezvous for the present year at no great distance apart, in Pierre's Hole, a deep valley in the heart of the mountains, and thither Captain Bonneville intended to shape his course.

It is not easy to do justice to the exulting feelings of the worthy captain, at finding himself at the head of a stout band of hunters, trappers, and woodmen; fairly launched on the broad prairies, with his face to the boundless West. The tamest inhabitant of cities, the veriest spoiled child of civilization, feels his heart dilate and his pulse beat high, on finding himself on horseback

in the glorious wilderness; what then must be the excitement of one whose imagination had been stimulated by a residence on the frontier, and to whom the wilderness was a region of romance!

His hardy followers partook of his excitement. Most of them had already experienced the wild freedom of savage life, and looked forward to a renewal of past scenes of adventure and exploit. Their very appearance and equipment exhibited a piebald mixture, half civilized and half savage. Many of them looked more like Indians than white men, in their garbs and accoutrements, and their very horses were caparisoned in barbaric style, with fantastic trappings. The outset of a band of adventurers on one of these expeditions is always animated and joyous. The welkin rang with their shouts and yelps, after the manner of the savages; and with boisterous jokes and light-hearted laughter. As they passed the straggling hamlets and solitary cabins that fringe the skirts of the frontier, they would startle their inmates by Indian yells and war-whoops, or regale them with grotesque feats of horsemanship, well suited to their half savage appearance. Most of these abodes were inhabited by men who had themselves been in similar expeditions; they welcomed the travellers, therefore, as brother trappers, treated them with a hunter's hospitality, and cheered them with an honest God speed, at parting.

And here we would remark a great difference, in point

of character and quality, between the two classes of trappers, the "American" and "French," as they are called in contradistinction. The latter is meant to designate the French creole of Canada or Louisiana; the former, the trapper of the old American stock, from Kentucky, Tennessee, and others of the Western States. The French trapper is represented as a lighter, softer, more self-indulgent kind of man. He must have his Indian wife, his lodge, and his petty conveniences. He is gay and thoughtless, takes little heed of landmarks, depends upon his leaders and companions to think for the common weal, and, if left to himself, is easily perplexed and lost.

The American trapper stands by himself, and is peerless for the service of the wilderness. Drop him in the midst of a prairie, or in the heart of the mountains, and he is never at a loss. He notices every landmark; can retrace his route through the most monotonous plains, or the most perplexed labyrinths of the mountains; no danger nor difficulty can appall him, and he scorns to complain under any privation. In equipping the two kinds of trappers, the Creole and Canadian are apt to prefer the light fusee; the American always grasps his rifle; he despises what he calls the "shot-gun." We give these estimates on the authority of a trader of long experience, and a foreigner by birth. "I consider one American," said he, "equal to three Canadians in point of sagacity, aptness at resources, self-dependence, and fearlessness

of spirit. In fact, no one can cope with him as a stark tramper of the wilderness."

Beside the two classes of trappers just mentioned, Captain Bonneville had enlisted several Delaware Indians in his employ, on whose hunting qualifications he placed great reliance.

On the 6th of May the travellers passed the last border habitation, and bade a long farewell to the ease and security of civilization. The buoyant and clamorous spirits with which they had commenced their march, gradually subsided as they entered upon its difficulties. They found the prairies saturated with the heavy cold rains, prevalent in certain seasons of the year in this part of the country, the wagon wheels sank deep in the mire, the horses were often to the fetlock, and both steed and rider were completely jaded by the evening of the 12th, when they reached the Kansas River; a fine stream about three hundred yards wide, entering the Missouri from the south. Though fordable in almost every part at the end of summer and during the autumn, yet it was necessary to construct a raft for the transportation of the wagons and effects. All this was done in the course of the following day, and by evening, the whole party arrived at the agency of the Kansas tribe. This was under the superintendence of General Clarke, brother of the celebrated traveller of the same name, who, with Lewis, made the first expedition down the waters of the Columbia. He was living like a patriarch, surrounded by la-

borers and interpreters, all snugly housed, and provided with excellent farms. The functionary next in consequence to the agent was the blacksmith, a most important, and, indeed, indispensable personage in a frontier community. The Kansas resemble the Osages in features, dress, and language; they raise corn and hunt the buffalo, ranging the Kansas River, and its tributary streams; at the time of the captain's visit, they were at war with the Pawnees of the Nebraska, or Platte River.

The unusual sight of a train of wagons, caused quite a sensation among these savages; who thronged about the caravan, examining every thing minutely, and asking a thousand questions: exhibiting a degree of excitability, and a lively curiosity, totally opposite to that apathy with which their race is so often reproached.

The personage who most attracted the captain's attention at this place, was "White Plume," the Kansas chief, and they soon became good friends. White Plume (we are pleased with his chivalrous *soubriquet*) inhabited a large stone house, built for him by order of the American government: but the establishment had not been carried out in corresponding style. It might be palace without, but it was wigwam within: so that, between the stateliness of his mansion, and the squalidness of his furniture, the gallant White Plume presented some such whimsical incongruity as we see in the gala equipments of an Indian chief, on a treaty-making embassy at Washington, who has been generously decked out in cocked

hat and military coat, in contrast to his breech-clout and leathern leggings; being grand officer at top, and ragged Indian at bottom.

White Plume was so taken with the courtesy of the captain, and pleased with one or two presents received from him, that he accompanied him a day's journey on his march, and passed a night in his camp, on the margin of a small stream. The method of encamping generally observed by the captain, was as follows: The twenty wagons were disposed in a square, at the distance of thirty-three feet from each other. In every interval there was a mess stationed; and each mess had its fire, where the men cooked, ate, gossiped, and slept. The horses were placed in the centre of the square, with a guard stationed over them at night.

The horses were "side-lined," as it is termed: that is to say the fore and hind foot on the same side of the animal were tied together, so as to be within eighteen inches of each other. A horse thus fettered is for a time sadly embarrassed, but soon becomes sufficiently accustomed to the restraint to move about slowly. It prevents his wandering; and his being easily carried off at night by lurking Indians. When a horse that is "foot free," is tied to one thus secured, the latter forms, as it were, a pivot, round which the other runs and curvets, in case of alarm.

The encampment of which we are speaking, presented a striking scene. The various mess-fires were surrounded

by picturesque groups, standing, sitting, and reclining; some busied in cooking, others in cleaning their weapons: while the frequent laugh told that the rough joke, or merry story was going on. In the middle of the camp, before the principal lodge, sat the two chieftains, Captain Bonneville and White Plume, in soldier-like communion, the captain delighted with the opportunity of meeting, on social terms, with one of the red warriors of the wilderness, the unsophisticated children of nature. The latter was squatted on his buffalo robe, his strong features and red skin glaring in the broad light of a blazing fire, while he recounted astounding tales of the bloody exploits of his tribe and himself, in their wars with the Pawnees; for there are no soldiers more given to long campaigning stories, than Indian "braves."

The feuds of White Plume, however, had not been confined to the red men; he had much to say of brushes with bee hunters, a class of offenders for whom he seemed to cherish a particular abhorrence. As the species of hunting prosecuted by these worthies is not laid down in any of the ancient books of venerie, and is, in fact, peculiar to our western frontier, a word or two on the subject may not be unacceptable to the reader.

The bee hunter is generally some settler on the verge of the prairie; a long, lank fellow, of fever and ague complexion, acquired from living on new soil, and in a hut built of green logs. In the autumn, when the harvest is over, these frontier settlers form parties of two or three,

and prepare for a bee hunt. Having provided themselves with a wagon, and a number of empty casks, they sally off, armed with their rifles, into the wilderness, directing their course east, west, north, or south, without any regard to the ordinance of the American government, which strictly forbids all trespass upon the lands belonging to the Indian tribes.

The belts of woodland that traverse the lower prairies, and border the rivers, are peopled by innumerable swarms of wild bees, which make their hives in hollow trees, and fill them with honey tolled from the rich flowers of the prairies. The bees, according to popular assertion, are migrating, like the settlers, to the west. An Indian trader, well experienced in the country, informs us that within ten years that he has passed in the Far West, the bee has advanced westward above a hundred miles. It is said on the Missouri, that the wild turkey and the wild bee go up the river together: neither are found in the upper regions. It is but recently that the wild turkey has been killed on the Nebraska, or Platte; and his travelling competitor, the wild bee, appeared there about the same time.

Be all this as it may: the course of our party of bee hunters, is to make a wide circuit through the woody river bottoms, and the patches of forest on the prairies, marking, as they go out, every tree in which they have detected a hive. These marks are generally respected by any other bee hunter that should come upon their

track. When they have marked sufficient to fill all their casks, they turn their faces homeward, cut down the trees as they proceed, and having loaded their wagon with honey and wax, return well pleased to the settlements.

Now it so happens that the Indians relish wild honey as highly as do the white men, and are the more delighted with this natural luxury from its having, in many instances, but recently made its appearance in their lands. The consequence is, numberless disputes and conflicts between them and the bee hunters: and often a party of the latter, returning, laden with rich spoil, from one of their forays, are apt to be waylaid by the native lords of the soil; their honey to be seized, their harness cut to pieces, and themselves left to find their way home the best way they can, happy to escape with no greater personal harm than a sound rib-roasting.

Such were the marauders of whose offenses the gallant White Plume made the most bitter complaint. They were chiefly the settlers of the western part of Missouri, who are the most famous bee hunters on the frontier, and whose favorite hunting ground lies within the lands of the Kansas tribe. According to the account of White Plume, however, matters were pretty fairly balanced between him and the offenders; he having as often treated them to a taste of the bitter, as they had robbed him of the sweets.

It is but justice to this gallant chief to say, that he

gave proofs of having acquired some of the lights of civilization from his proximity to the whites, as was evinced in his knowledge of driving a bargain. He required hard cash in return for some corn with which he supplied the worthy captain, and left the latter at a loss which most to admire, his native chivalry as a brave, or his acquired adroitness as a trader.

CHAPTER III.

WIDE PRAIRIES. — VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS. — TABULAR HILLS. — SLABS OF SANDSTONE. — NEBRASKA OR PLATTE RIVER. — SCANTY FARE. — BUFFALO SKULLS. — WAGONS TURNED INTO BOATS. — HERDS OF BUFFALO. — CLIFFS RESEMBLING CASTLES. — THE CHIMNEY. — SCOTT'S BLUFFS. — STORY CONNECTED WITH THEM. — THE BIGHORN OR AHSAHTA. — ITS NATURE AND HABITS. — DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THAT AND THE "WOOLLY SHEEP," OR GOAT OF THE MOUNTAINS.

FROM the middle to the end of May, Captain Bonneville pursued a western course over vast undulating plains, destitute of tree or shrub, rendered miry by occasional rain, and cut up by deep water-courses, where they had to dig roads for their wagons down the soft crumbling banks, and to throw bridges across the streams. The weather had attained the summer heat; the thermometer standing about fifty-seven degrees in the morning, early, but rising to about ninety degrees at noon. The incessant breezes, however, which sweep these vast plains, render the heats endurable. Game was scanty, and they had to eke out their scanty fare with wild roots and vegetables, such as the Indian potato, the wild onion, and the prairie tomato, and they met with quantities of "red root," from which the hunters make a very palatable beverage. The only human being that crossed their path was a Kansas war-

rior, returning from some solitary expedition of bravado or revenge, bearing a Pawnee scalp as a trophy.

The country gradually rose as they proceeded westward, and their route took them over high ridges, commanding wide and beautiful prospects. The vast plain was studded on the west with innumerable hills of conical shape, such as are seen north of the Arkansas River. These hills have their summits apparently cut off about the same elevation, so as to leave flat surfaces at top. It is conjectured by some, that the whole country may originally have been of the altitude of these tabular hills; but through some process of nature may have sunk to its present level; these insulated eminences being protected by broad foundations of solid rock.

Captain Bonneville mentions another geological phenomenon north of Red River, where the surface of the earth, in considerable tracts of country, is covered with broad slabs of sandstone, having the form and position of grave-stones, and looking as if they had been forced up by some subterranean agitation. "The resemblance," says he, "which these very remarkable spots have in many places to old church-yards is curious in the extreme. One might almost fancy himself among the tombs of the pre-Adamites."

On the 2d of June, they arrived on the main stream of the Nebraska or Platte River; twenty-five miles below the head of the Great Island. The low banks of this river give it an appearance of great width. Captain Bon-

neville measured it in one place, and found it twenty-two hundred yards from bank to bank. Its depth was from three to six feet, the bottom full of quicksands. The Nebraska is studded with islands covered with that species of poplar called the cotton-wood tree. Keeping up along the course of this river for several days, they were obliged, from the scarcity of game, to put themselves upon short allowance, and, occasionally, to kill a steer. They bore their daily labors and privations, however, with great good humor, taking their tone, in all probability, from the buoyant spirit of their leader. "If the weather was inclement," says the captain, "we watched the clouds, and hoped for a sight of the blue sky and the merry sun. If food was scanty, we regaled ourselves with the hope of soon falling in with herds of buffalo, and having nothing to do but slay and eat." We doubt whether the genial captain is not describing the cheeriness of his own breast, which gave a cheery aspect to everything around him.

There certainly were evidences, however, that the country was not always equally destitute of game. At one place, they observed a field decorated with buffalo skulls, arranged in circles, curves, and other mathematical figures, as if for some mystic rite or ceremony. They were almost innumerable, and seemed to have been a vast hecatomb offered up in thanksgiving to the Great Spirit for some signal success in the chase.

On the 11th of June, they came to the fork of the Ne-

braska, where it divides itself into two equal and beautiful streams. One of these branches rises in the west-southwest, near the head waters of the Arkansas. Up the course of this branch, as Captain Bonneville was well aware, lay the route to the Camanche and Kioway Indians, and to the northern Mexican settlements; of the other branch he knew nothing. Its sources might lie among wild and inaccessible cliffs, and tumble and foam down rugged defiles and over craggy precipices; but its direction was in the true course, and up this stream he determined to prosecute his route to the Rocky Mountains. Finding it impossible, from quicksands and other dangerous impediments, to cross the river in this neighborhood, he kept up along the south fork for two days, merely seeking a safe fording place. At length he encamped, caused the bodies of the wagons to be dislodged from the wheels, covered with buffalo hides, and besmeared with a compound of tallow and ashes; thus forming rude boats. In these, they ferried their effects across the stream, which was six hundred yards wide, with a swift and strong current. Three men were in each boat, to manage it; others waded across, pushing the barks before them. Thus all crossed in safety. A march of nine miles took them over high rolling prairies to the north fork; their eyes being regaled with the welcome sight of herds of buffalo at a distance, some careering the plain, others grazing and reposing in the natural meadows.

Skirting along the north fork for a day or two, excessively annoyed by musquitoes and buffalo gnats, they reached, on the evening of the 17th, a small but beautiful grove, from which issued the confused notes of singing birds, the first they had heard since crossing the boundary of Missouri. After so many days of weary travelling, through a naked, monotonous, and silent country, it was delightful once more to hear the song of the bird, and to behold the verdure of the grove. It was a beautiful sunset, and a sight of the glowing rays, mantling the tree-tops and rustling branches, gladdened every heart. They pitched their camp in the grove, kindled their fires, partook merrily of their rude fare, and resigned themselves to the sweetest sleep they had enjoyed since their outset upon the prairies.

The country now became rugged and broken. High bluffs advanced upon the river, and forced the travellers occasionally to leave its banks and wind their course into the interior. In one of the wild and solitary passes, they were startled by the trail of four or five pedestrians, whom they supposed to be spies from some predatory camp of either Arickara or Crow Indians. This obliged them to redouble their vigilance at night, and to keep especial watch upon their horses. In these rugged and elevated regions they began to see the black-tailed deer, a species larger than the ordinary kind, and chiefly found in rocky and mountainous countries. They had reached also a great buffalo range; Captain Bonneville ascended

a high bluff, commanding an extensive view of the surrounding plains. As far as his eye could reach, the country seemed absolutely blackened by innumerable herds. No language, he says, could convey an adequate idea of the vast living mass thus presented to his eye. He remarked that the bulls and cows generally congregated in separate herds.

Opposite to the camp at this place was a singular phenomenon, which is among the curiosities of the country. It is called the Chimney. The lower part is a conical mound, rising out of the naked plain; from the summit shoots up a shaft or column, about one hundred and twenty feet in height, from which it derives its name. The height of the whole, according to Captain Bonneville, is a hundred and seventy-five yards. It is composed of indurated clay, with alternate layers of red and white sandstone, and may be seen at the distance of upwards of thirty miles.

On the 21st, they encamped amidst high and beetling cliffs of indurated clay and sandstone, bearing the semblance of towers, castles, churches, and fortified cities. At a distance, it was scarcely possible to persuade one's self that the works of art were not mingled with these fantastic freaks of nature. They have received the name of Scott's Bluffs, from a melancholy circumstance. A number of years since, a party were descending the upper part of the river in canoes, when their frail barks were overturned and all their powder spoiled. Their

rifles being thus rendered useless, they were unable to procure food by hunting, and had to depend upon roots and wild fruits for subsistence. After suffering extremely from hunger, they arrived at Laramie's Fork, a small tributary of the north branch of the Nebraska, about sixty miles above the cliffs just mentioned. Here one of the party, by the name of Scott, was taken ill; and his companions came to a halt, until he should recover health and strength sufficient to proceed. While they were searching round in quest of edible roots, they discovered a fresh trail of white men, who had evidently but recently preceded them. What was to be done? By a forced march they might overtake this party, and thus be able to reach the settlements in safety. Should they linger, they might all perish of famine and exhaustion. Scott, however, was incapable of moving; they were too feeble to aid him forward, and dreaded that such a clog would prevent their coming up with the advance party. They determined, therefore, to abandon him to his fate. Accordingly, under pretense of seeking food, and such simples as might be efficacious in his malady, they deserted him and hastened forward upon the trail. They succeeded in overtaking the party of which they were in quest, but concealed their faithless desertion of Scott; alleging that he had died of disease.

On the ensuing summer, these very individuals visiting these parts in company with others, came suddenly upon the bleached bones and grinning skull of a human skele-

ton, which, by certain signs they recognized for the remains of Scott. This was sixty long miles from the place where they had abandoned him; and it appeared that the wretched man had crawled that immense distance before death put an end to his miseries. The wild and picturesque bluffs in the neighborhood of his lonely grave have ever since borne his name.

Amidst this wild and striking scenery, Captain Bonneville, for the first time, beheld flocks of the ahsahta or bighorn, an animal which frequents these cliffs in great numbers. They accord with the nature of such scenery, and add much to its romantic effect; bounding like goats from crag to crag, often trooping along the lofty shelves of the mountains, under the guidance of some venerable patriarch, with horns twisted lower than his muzzle, and sometimes peering over the edge of a precipice, so high that they appear scarce bigger than crows; indeed, it seems a pleasure to them to seek the most rugged and frightful situations, doubtless from a feeling of security.

This animal is commonly called the mountain sheep, and is often confounded with another animal, the "woolly sheep," found more to the northward, about the country of the Flatheads. The latter likewise inhabits cliffs in summer, but descends into the valleys in the winter. It has white wool, like a sheep, mingled with a thin growth of long hair; but it has short legs, a deep belly, and a beard like a goat. Its horns are about five inches long, slightly curved backwards, black as jet, and beautifully

polished. Its hoofs are of the same color. This animal is by no means so active as the bighorn; it does not bound much, but sits a good deal upon its haunches. It is not so plentiful either; rarely more than two or three are seen at a time. Its wool alone gives a resemblance to the sheep; it is more properly of the goat genus. The flesh is said to have a musty flavor; some have thought the fleece might be valuable, as it is said to be as fine as that of the goat of Cashmere, but it is not to be procured in sufficient quantities.

The ahsahta, argali, or bighorn, on the contrary, has short hair like a deer, and resembles it in shape, but has the head and horns of a sheep, and its flesh is said to be a delicious mutton. The Indians consider it more sweet and delicate than any other kind of venison. It abounds in the Rocky Mountains, from the fiftieth degree of north latitude, quite down to California; generally in the highest regions capable of vegetation; sometimes it ventures into the valleys, but on the least alarm, regains its favorite cliffs and precipices, where it is perilous, if not impossible for the hunter to follow.*

* Dimensions of a male of this species, from the nose to the base of the tail, five feet; length of the tail, four inches; girth of the body, four feet; height, three feet eight inches; the horn, three feet six inches long; one foot three inches in circumference at base.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ALARM.—CROW INDIANS.—THEIR APPEARANCE.—MODE OF APPROACH—THEIR VENGEFUL ERRAND—THEIR CURIOSITY.—HOSTILITY BETWEEN THE CROWS AND BLACKFEET.—LOVING CONDUCT OF THE CROWS.—LARAMIE'S FORK.—FIRST NAVIGATION OF THE NEBRASKA.—GREAT ELEVATION OF THE COUNTRY.—RARITY OF THE ATMOSPHERE—ITS EFFECT ON THE WOOD-WORK OF WAGONS.—BLACK HILLS—THEIR WILD AND BROKEN SCENERY.—INDIAN DOGS.—CROW TROPHIES.—STERILE AND DREARY COUNTRY.—BANKS OF THE SWEET WATER.—BUFFALO HUNTING.—ADVENTURE OF TOM CAIN, THE IRISH COOK.

WHEN on the march, Captain Bonneville always sent some of his best hunters in the advance to reconnoitre the country, as well as to look out for game. On the 24th of May, as the caravan was slowly journeying up the banks of the Nebraska, the hunters came galloping back, waving their caps, and giving the alarm cry, Indians! Indians!

The captain immediately ordered a halt: the hunters now came up and announced that a large war-party of Crow Indians were just above, on the river. The captain knew the character of these savages; one of the most roving, warlike, crafty, and predatory tribes of the mountains; horse-stealers of the first order, and easily provoked to acts of sanguinary violence. Orders were accordingly given to prepare for action, and every one

promptly took the post that had been assigned him, in the general order of the march, in all cases of warlike emergency.

Everything being put in battle array, the captain took the lead of his little band, and moved on slowly and warily. In a little while he beheld the Crow warriors emerging from among the bluffs. There were about sixty of them; fine martial-looking fellows, painted and arrayed for war, and mounted on horses decked out with all kinds of wild trappings. They came prancing along in gallant style, with many wild and dexterous evolutions, for none can surpass them in horsemanship; and their bright colors, and flaunting and fantastic embellishments, glaring and sparkling in the morning sunshine, gave them really a striking appearance.

Their mode of approach, to one not acquainted with the tactics and ceremonies of this rude chivalry of the wilderness, had an air of direct hostility. They came galloping forward in a body, as if about to make a furious charge, but, when close at hand, opened to the right and left, and wheeled in wide circles round the travellers, whooping and yelling like maniacs.

This done, their mock fury sank into a calm, and the chief, approaching the captain, who had remained warily drawn up, though informed of the pacific nature of the manœuvre, extended to him the hand of friendship. The pipe of peace was smoked, and now all was good fellowship.

The Crows were in pursuit of a band of Cheyennes, who had attacked their village in the night, and killed one of their people. They had already been five and twenty days on the track of the marauders, and were determined not to return home until they had sated their revenge.

A few days previously, some of their scouts, who were ranging the country at a distance from the main body, had discovered the party of Captain Bonneville. They had dogged it for a time in secret, astonished at the long train of wagons and oxen, and especially struck with the sight of a cow and calf, quietly following the caravan; supposing them to be some kind of tame buffalo. Having satisfied their curiosity, they carried back to their chief intelligence of all that they had seen. He had, in consequence, diverged from his pursuit of vengeance to behold the wonders described to him. "Now that we have met you," said he to Captain Bonneville, "and have seen these marvels with our own eyes, our hearts are glad." In fact, nothing could exceed the curiosity evinced by these people as to the objects before them. Wagons had never been seen by them before, and they examined them with the greatest minuteness; but the calf was the peculiar object of their admiration. They watched it with intense interest as it licked the hands accustomed to feed it, and were struck with the mild expression of its countenance and its perfect docility.

After much sage consultation, they at length deter-

mined that it must be the "great medicine" of the white party; an appellation given by the Indians to anything of supernatural and mysterious power, that is guarded as a talisman. They were completely thrown out in their conjecture, however, by an offer of the white men to exchange the calf for a horse; their estimation of the great medicine sank in an instant, and they declined the bargain.

At the request of the Crow chieftain the two parties encamped together, and passed the residue of the day in company. The captain was well pleased with every opportunity to gain a knowledge of the "unsophisticated sons of nature," who had so long been objects of his poetic speculations; and indeed this wild, horse-stealing tribe is one of the most notorious of the mountains. The chief, of course, had his scalps to show and his battles to recount. The Blackfoot is the hereditary enemy of the Crow, towards whom hostility is like a cherished principle of religion; for every tribe, besides its casual antagonists, has some enduring foe with whom there can be no permanent reconciliation. The Crows and Blackfeet, upon the whole, are enemies worthy of each other, being rogues and ruffians of the first water. As their predatory excursions extend over the same regions, they often come in contact with each other, and these casual conflicts serve to keep their wits awake and their passions alive.

The present party of Crows, however, evinced nothing

of the invidious character for which they are renowned. During the day and night that they were encamped in company with the travellers, their conduct was friendly in the extreme. They were, in fact, quite irksome in their attentions, and had a caressing manner at times quite importunate. It was not until after separation on the following morning, that the captain and his men ascertained the secret of all this loving-kindness. In the course of their fraternal caresses, the Crows had contrived to empty the pockets of their white brothers; to abstract the very buttons from their coats, and, above all, to make free with their hunting knives.

By equal altitudes of the sun, taken at this last encampment, Captain Bonneville ascertained his latitude to be 41° 47′ north. The thermometer, at six o'clock in the morning, stood at fifty-nine degrees; at two o'clock P. M., at ninety-two degrees; and at six o'clock in the evening, at seventy degrees.

The Black Hills, or Mountains, now began to be seen at a distance, printing the horizon with their rugged and broken outlines; and threatening to oppose a difficult barrier in the way of the travellers.

On the 26th of May, the travellers encamped at Laramie's Fork, a clear and beautiful stream, rising in the west-southwest, maintaining an average width of twenty yards, and winding through broad meadows abounding in currants and gooseberries, and adorned with groves and clumps of trees.

By an observation of Jupiter's satellites, with a Dolland reflecting telescope, Captain Bonneville ascertained the longitude to be 102° 57′ west of Greenwich.

We will here step ahead of our narrative to observe, that about three years after the time of which we are treating, Mr. Robert Campbell, formerly of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, descended the Platte from this fork, in skin canoes, thus proving, what had always been discredited, that the river was navigable. About the same time, he built a fort or trading post at Laramie's Fork, which he named Fort William, after his friend and partner, Mr. William Sublette. Since that time, the Platte has become a highway for the fur traders.

For some days past, Captain Bonneville had been made sensible of the great elevation of country into which he was gradually ascending, by the effect of the dryness and rarefaction of the atmosphere upon his wagons. The wood-work shrunk; the paint boxes of the wheels were continually working out, and it was necessary to support the spokes by stout props to prevent their falling asunder. The travellers were now entering one of those great steppes of the Far West, where the prevalent aridity of the atmosphere renders the country unfit for cultivation. In these regions there is a fresh sweet growth of grass in the spring, but it is scanty and short, and parches up in the course of the summer, so that there is none for the hunters to set fire to in the autumn. It is a common observation, that "above the

forks of the Platte the grass does not burn." All attempts at agriculture and gardening in the neighborhood of Fort William, have been attended with very little success. The grain and vegetables raised there have been scanty in quantity and poor in quality. The great elevation of these plains, and the dryness of the atmosphere, will tend to retain these immense regions in a state of pristine wildness.

In the course of a day or two more, the travellers entered that wild and broken tract of the Crow country called the Black Hills, and here their journey became toilsome in the extreme. Rugged steeps and deep ravines incessantly obstructed their progress, so that a great part of the day was spent in the painful toil of digging through banks, filling up ravines, forcing the wagons up the most forbidding ascents, or swinging them with ropes down the face of dangerous precipices. The shoes of their horses were worn out, and their feet injured by the rugged and stony roads. The travellers were annoyed also by frequent but brief storms, which would come hurrying over the hills, or through the mountain defiles, rage with great fury for a short time, and then pass off, leaving everything calm and serene again.

For several nights the camp had been infested by vagabond Indian dogs, prowling about in quest of food. They were about the size of a large pointer; with ears short and erect, and a long bushy tail—altogether, they bore a striking resemblance to a wolf. These skulking visitors

would keep about the purlieus of the camp until daylight; when, on the first stir of life among the sleepers, they would scamper off until they reached some rising ground, where they would take their seats, and keep a sharp and hungry watch upon every movement. The moment the travellers were fairly on the march, and the camp was abandoned, these starveling hangers-on would hasten to the deserted fires to seize upon the half-picked bones, the offals and garbage that lay about; and, having made a hasty meal, with many a snap and snarl and growl, would follow leisurely on the trail of the caravan. Many attempts were made to coax or catch them, but in vain. Their quick and suspicious eyes caught the slightest sinister movement, and they turned and scampered off. At length one was taken. He was terribly alarmed, and crouched and trembled as if expecting instant death. Soothed, however, by caresses, he began after a time to gather confidence and wag his tail, and at length was brought to follow close at the heels of his captors, still, however, darting around furtive and suspicious glances, and evincing a disposition to scamper off upon the least alarm.

On the first of July the band of Crow warriors again crossed their path. They came in vaunting and vainglorious style; displaying five Cheyenne scalps, the trophies of their vengeance. They were now bound homewards, to appease the manes of their comrade by these proofs that his death had been revenged, and intended

to have scalp-dances and other triumphant rejoicings. Captain Bonneville and his men, however, were by no means disposed to renew their confiding intimacy with these crafty savages, and above all, took care to avoid their pilfering caresses. They remarked one precaution of the Crows with respect to their horses; to protect their hoofs from the sharp and jagged rocks among which they had to pass, they had covered them with shoes of buffalo hide.

The route of the travellers lay generally along the course of the Nebraska or Platte, but occasionally, where steep promontories advanced to the margin of the stream, they were obliged to make inland circuits. One of these took them through a bold and stern country, bordered by a range of low mountains, running east and west. Everything around bore traces of some fearful convulsion of nature in times long past. Hitherto the various strata of rock had exhibited a gentle elevation towards the southwest, but here everything appeared to have been subverted, and thrown out of place. In many places there were heavy beds of white sandstone resting upon red. Immense strata of rocks jutted up into crags and cliffs; and sometimes formed perpendicular walls and overhanging precipices. An air of sterility prevailed over these savage wastes. The valleys were destitute of herbage, and scantily clothed with a stunted species of wormwood, generally known among traders and trappers by the name of sage. From an elevated

point of their march through this region, the travellers caught a beautiful view of the Powder River Mountains away to the north, stretching along the very verge of the horizon, and seeming, from the snow with which they were mantled, to be a chain of small white clouds, connecting sky and earth.

Though the thermometer at midday ranged from eighty to ninety, and even sometimes rose to ninety-three degrees, yet occasional spots of snow were to be seen on the tops of the low mountains, among which the travellers were journeying; proofs of the great elevation of the whole region.

The Nebraska, in its passage through the Black Hills, is confined to a much narrower channel than that through which it flows in the plains below; but it is deeper and clearer, and rushes with a stronger current. The scenery, also, is more varied and beautiful. Sometimes it glides rapidly but smoothly through a picturesque valley, between wooded banks; then, forcing its way into the bosom of rugged mountains, it rushes impetuously through narrow defiles, roaring and foaming down rocks and rapids, until it is again soothed to rest in some peaceful valley.

On the 12th of July, Captain Bonneville abandoned the main stream of the Nebraska, which was continually shouldered by rugged promontories, and making a bend to the southwest, for a couple of days, part of the time over plains of loose sand, encamped on the 14th, on the

banks of the Sweet Water, a stream about twenty yards in breadth, and four or five feet deep, flowing between low banks over a sandy soil, and forming one of the forks or upper branches of the Nebraska. Up this stream they now shaped their course for several successive days, tending, generally, to the west. The soil was light and sandy; the country much diversified. Frequently the plains were studded with isolated blocks of rock, sometimes in the shape of a half globe, and from three to four hundred feet high. These singular masses had occasionally a very imposing, and even sublime appearance, rising from the midst of a savage and lonely landscape.

As the travellers continued to advance, they became more and more sensible of the elevation of the country. The hills around were more generally capped with snow. The men complained of cramps and colics, sore lips and mouths, and violent headaches. The wood-work of the wagons also shrank so much, that it was with difficulty the wheels were kept from falling to pieces. The country bordering upon the river was frequently gashed with deep ravines, or traversed by high bluffs, to avoid which, the travellers were obliged to make wide circuits through the plains. In the course of these, they came upon immense herds of buffalo, which kept scouring off in the van, like a retreating army.

Among the motley retainers of the camp was Tom Cain, a raw Irishman, who officiated as cook, whose various blunders and expedients in his novel situation,

and in the wild scenes and wild kind of life into which he had suddenly been thrown, had made him a kind of butt or droll of the camp. Tom, however, began to discover an ambition superior to his station; and the conversation of the hunters, and their stories of their exploits, inspired him with a desire to elevate himself to the dignity of their order. The buffalo in such immense droves presented a tempting opportunity for making his first essay. He rode, in the line of march, all prepared for action: his powder-flask and shot-pouch knowingly slung at the pommel of his saddle, to be at hand; his rifle balanced on his shoulder. While in this plight, a troop of buffalo came trotting by in great alarm. In an instant, Tom sprang from his horse and gave chase on foot. Finding they were leaving him behind, he levelled his rifle and pulled trigger. His shot produced no other effect than to increase the speed of the buffalo, and to frighten his own horse, who took to his heels, and scampered off with all the ammunition. Tom scampered after him, hallooing with might and main, and the wild horse and wild Irishman soon disappeared among the ravines of the prairie. Captain Bonneville, who was at the head of the line, and had seen the transaction at a distance, detached a party in pursuit of Tom. After a long interval they returned, leading the frightened horse; but though they had scoured the country, and looked out and shouted from every height, they had seen nothing of his rider.

As Captain Bonneville knew Tom's utter awkwardness and inexperience, and the dangers of a bewildered Irishman in the midst of a prairie, he halted and encamped at an early hour, that there might be a regular hunt for him in the morning.

At early dawn on the following day scouts were sent off in every direction, while the main body, after breakfast, proceeded slowly on its course. It was not until the middle of the afternoon that the hunters returned, with honest Tom mounted behind one of them. They had found him in a complete state of perplexity and amazement. His appearance caused shouts of merriment in the camp,—but Tom for once could not join in the mirth raised at his expense: he was completely chapfallen, and apparently cured of the hunting mania for the rest of his life.

CHAPTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SCENERY.—WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS.—TREASURY OF WATERS.—A STRAY HORSE.—AN INDIAN TRAIL.—TROUT STREAMS.—THE GREAT GREEN RIVER VALLEY.—AN ALARM.—A BAND OF TRAPPERS.—FONTENELLE, HIS INFORMATION.—SUFFERINGS OF THIRST.—ENCAMPMENT ON THE SEEDS-KE-DEE.—STRATEGY OF RIVAL TRADERS.—FORTIFICATION OF THE CAMP.—THE BLACKFEET.—BANDITTI OF THE MOUNTAINS.—THEIR CHARACTER AND HABITS.

IT was on the 20th of July that Captain Bonneville first came in sight of the grand region of his hopes and anticipations, the Rocky Mountains. He had been making a bend to the south, to avoid some obstacles along the river, and had attained a high, rocky ridge, when a magnificent prospect burst upon his sight. To the west, rose the Wind River Mountains, with their bleached and snowy summits towering into the clouds. These stretched far to the north-northwest, until they melted away into what appeared to be faint clouds, but which the experienced eyes of the veteran hunters of the party recognized for the rugged mountains of the Yellowstone; at the feet of which, extended the wild Crow country: a perilous, though profitable region for the trapper.

To the southwest, the eye ranged over an immense extent of wilderness, with what appeared to be a snowy vapor resting upon its horizon. This, however, was pointed out as another branch of the Great Chippewyan, or Rocky chain; being the Eutaw Mountains, at whose basis, the wandering tribe of hunters of the same name pitch their tents.

We can imagine the enthusiasm of the worthy captain, when he beheld the vast and mountainous scene of his adventurous enterprise thus suddenly unveiled before him. We can imagine with what feelings of awe and admiration he must have contemplated the Wind River Sierra, or bed of mountains; that great fountain-head, from whose springs, and lakes, and melted snows, some of those mighty rivers take their rise, which wander over hundreds of miles of varied country and clime, and find their way to the opposite waves of the Atlantic and the Pacific.

The Wind River Mountains are, in fact, among the most remarkable of the whole Rocky chain; and would appear to be among the loftiest. They form, as it were, a great bed of mountains, about eighty miles in length, and from twenty to thirty in breadth; with rugged peaks, covered with eternal snows, and deep, narrow valleys, full of springs, and brooks, and rock-bound lakes. From this great treasury of waters, issue forth limpid streams, which, augmenting as they descend, become main tributaries, of the Missouri on the one side, and the Columbia

on the other; and give rise to the Seeds-ke-dee Agie, or Green River, the great Colorado of the West, that empties its current into the Gulf of California.

The Wind River Mountains are notorious in hunters' and trappers' stories: their rugged defiles, and the rough tracts about their neighborhood, having been lurking-places for the predatory hordes of the mountains, and scenes of rough encounter with Crows and Blackfeet. It was to the west of these mountains, in the valley of the Seeds-ke-dee Agie, or Green River, that Captain Bonneville intended to make a halt, for the purpose of giving repose to his people and his horses, after their weary journeying; and of collecting information as to his future course. This Green River Valley, and its immediate neighborhood, as we have already observed, formed the main point of rendezvous, for the present year, of the rival fur companies, and the motley populace, civilized and savage, connected with them. Several days of rugged travel, however, yet remained for the captain and his men, before they should encamp in this desired resting-place.

On the 21st of July, as they were pursuing their course through one of the meadows of the Sweet Water, they beheld a horse grazing at a little distance. He showed no alarm at their approach, but suffered himself quietly to be taken, evincing a perfect state of tameness. The scouts of the party were instantly on the lookout for the owners of this animal; lest some dangerous band of

savages might be lurking in the vicinity. After a narrow search, they discovered the trail of an Indian party, which had evidently passed through that neighborhood but recently. The horse was accordingly taken possession of, as an estray; but a more vigilant watch than usual was kept round the camp at nights, lest his former owners should be upon the prowl.

The travellers had now attained so high an elevation, that on the 23d of July, at daybreak, there was considerable ice in the water-buckets, and the thermometer stood at twenty-two degrees. The rarity of the atmosphere continued to affect the wood-work of the wagons, and the wheels were incessantly falling to pieces. A remedy was at length devised. The tire of each wheel was taken off; a band of wood was nailed round the exterior of the felloes, the tire was then made red hot, replaced round the wheel, and suddenly cooled with water. By this means, the whole was bound together with great compactness.

The extreme elevation of these great steppes, which range along the feet of the Rocky Mountains, take away from the seeming height of their peaks, which yield to few in the known world in point of altitude above the level of the sea.

On the 24th, the travellers took final leave of the Sweet Water, and keeping westwardly, over a low and very rocky ridge, one of the most southern spurs of the Wind River Mountains, they encamped, after a march of

seven hours and a half, on the banks of a small clear stream, running to the south, in which they caught a number of fine trout.

The sight of these fish was hailed with pleasure, as a sign that they had reached the waters which flow into the Pacific; for it is only on the western streams of the Rocky Mountains that trout are to be taken. The stream on which they had thus encamped, proved, in effect, to be tributary to the Seeds-ke-dee Agie, or Green River, into which it flowed, at some distance to the south.

Captain Bonneville now considered himself as having fairly passed the crest of the Rocky Mountains; and felt some degree of exultation in being the first individual that had crossed, north of the settled provinces of Mexico, from the waters of the Atlantic to those of the Pacific, with wagons. Mr. William Sublette, the enterprising leader of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company had, two or three years previously, reached the valley of the Wind River, which lies on the northeast of the mountains; but had proceeded with them no further.

A vast valley now spread itself before the travellers, bounded on one side by the Wind River Mountains, and to the west, by a long range of high hills. This, Captain Bonneville was assured by a veteran hunter in his company, was the great valley of the Seeds-ke-dee; and the same informant would fain have persuaded him, that a small stream, three feet deep, which he came to on the 25th, was that river. The captain was convinced, how-

ever, that the stream was too insignificant to drain so wide a valley and the adjacent mountains: he encamped, therefore, at an early hour, on its borders, that he might take the whole of the next day to reach the main river; which he presumed to flow between him and the distant range of western hills.

On the 26th of July, he commenced his march at an early hour, making directly across the valley, towards the hills in the west; proceeding at as brisk a rate as the jaded condition of his horses would permit. About eleven o'clock in the morning, a great cloud of dust was descried in the rear, advancing directly on the trail of the party. The alarm was given; they all came to a halt, and held a council of war. Some conjectured that the band of Indians, whose trail they had discovered in the neighborhood of the stray horse, had been lying in wait for them, in some secret fastness of the mountains; and were about to attack them on the open plain, where they would have no shelter. Preparations were immediately made for defense; and a scouting party sent off to reconnoitre. They soon came galloping back, making signals that all was well. The cloud of dust was made by a band of fifty or sixty mounted trappers, belonging to the American Fur Company, who soon came up, leading their pack-horses. They were headed by Mr. Fontenelle, an experienced leader, or "partisan," as a chief of a party is called, in the technical language of the trappers.

Mr. Fontenelle informed Captain Bonneville, that he

was on his way from the company's trading post on the Yellowstone, to the yearly rendezvous, with reinforcements and supplies for their hunting and trading parties beyond the mountains; and that he expected to meet, by appointment, with a band of free trappers in that very neighborhood. He had fallen upon the trail of Captain Bonneville's party, just after leaving the Nebraska; and, finding that they had frightened off all the game, had been obliged to push on, by forced marches, to avoid famine: both men and horses were, therefore, much travel-worn; but this was no place to halt; the plain before them, he said, was destitute of grass and water, neither of which would be met with short of the Green River, which was yet at a considerable distance. He hoped, he added, as his party were all on horseback, to reach the river, with hard travelling, by nightfall: but he doubted the possibility of Captain Bonneville's arrival there with his wagons before the day following. Having imparted this information, he pushed forward with all speed.

Captain Bonneville followed on as fast as circumstances would permit. The ground was firm and gravelly; but the horses were too much fatigued to move rapidly. After a long and harassing day's march, without pausing for a noontide meal, they were compelled, at nine o'clock at night, to encamp in an open plain, destitute of water or pasturage. On the following morning, the horses were turned loose at the peep of day; to slake

their thirst, if possible, from the dew collected on the sparse grass, here and there springing up among dry sand-banks. The soil of a great part of this Green River Valley is a whitish clay, into which the rain cannot penetrate, but which dries and cracks with the sun. In some places it produces a salt weed, and grass along the margins of the streams; but the wider expanses of it are desolate and barren. It was not until noon that Captain Bonneville reached the banks of the Seeds-ke-dee, or Colorado of the West; in the meantime, the sufferings of both men and horses had been excessive, and it was with almost frantic eagerness that they hurried to allay their burning thirst in the limpid current of the river.

Fontenelle and his party had not fared much better; the chief part had managed to reach the river by nightfall, but were nearly knocked up by the exertion; the horses of others sank under them, and they were obliged to pass the night upon the road.

On the following morning, July 27th, Fontenelle moved his camp across the river; while Captain Bonneville proceeded some little distance below, where there was a small but fresh meadow, yielding abundant pasturage. Here the poor jaded horses were turned out to graze, and take their rest: the weary journey up the mountains had worn them down in flesh and spirit; but this last march across the thirsty plain had nearly finished them.

The captain had here the first taste of the boasted strategy of the fur trade. During his brief, but social

encampment, in company with Fontenelle, that experienced trapper had managed to win over a number of Delaware Indians whom the captain had brought with him, by offering them four hundred dollars each, for the ensuing autumnal hunt. The captain was somewhat astonished when he saw these hunters, on whose services he had calculated securely, suddenly pack up their traps, and go over to the rival camp. That he might, in some measure, however, be even with his competitor, he dispatched two scouts to look out for the band of free trappers who were to meet Fontenelle in this neighborhood, and to endeavor to bring them to his camp.

As it would be necessary to remain some time in this neighborhood, that both men and horses might repose and recruit their strength; and as it was a region full of danger, Captain Bonneville proceeded to fortify his camp with breastworks of logs and pickets.

These precautions were, at that time, peculiarly necessary, from the bands of Blackfeet Indians which were roving about the neighborhood. These savages are the most dangerous banditti of the mountains, and the inveterate foe of the trappers. They are Ishmaelites of the first order; always with weapon in hand, ready for action. The young braves of the tribe, who are destitute of property, go to war for booty; to gain horses, and acquire the means of setting up a lodge, supporting a family, and entitling themselves to a seat in the public councils. The veteran warriors fight merely for the love

of the thing, and the consequence which success gives them among their people.

They are capital horsemen, and are generally well mounted on short, stout horses, similar to the prairie ponies, to be met with at St. Louis. When on a war party, however, they go on foot, to enable them to skulk through the country with greater secrecy; to keep in thickets and ravines, and use more adroit subterfuges and stratagems. Their mode of warfare is entirely by ambush, surprise, and sudden assaults in the night time. If they succeed in causing a panic, they dash forward with a headlong fury: if the enemy is on the alert, and shows no signs of fear, they become wary and deliberate in their movements.

Some of them are armed in the primitive style, with bows and arrows; the greater part have American fusees, made after the fashion of those of the Hudson's Bay Company. These they procure at the trading post of the American Fur Company, on Marias River, where they traffic their peltries for arms, ammunition, clothing, and trinkets. They are extremely fond of spirituous liquors and tobacco; for which nuisances they are ready to exchange, not merely their guns and horses, but even their wives and daughters. As they are a treacherous race, and have cherished a lurking hostility to the whites ever since one of their tribe was killed by Mr. Lewis, the associate of General Clarke, in his exploring expedition across the Rocky Mountains, the American Fur Com-

pany is obliged constantly to keep at that post a garrison of sixty or seventy men.

Under the general name of Blackfeet, are comprehended several tribes: such as the Surcies, the Peagans, the Blood Indians, and the Gros Ventres of the Prairies: who roam about the southern branches of the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers, together with some other tribes further north.

The bands infesting the Wind River Mountains, and the country adjacent, at the time of which we are treating, were Gros Ventres *of the Prairies*, which are not to be confounded with Gros Ventres *of the Missouri*, who keep about the *lower* part of that river, and are friendly to the white men.

This hostile band keeps about the head waters of the Missouri, and numbers about nine hundred fighting men. Once in the course of two or three years they abandon their usual abodes, and make a visit to the Arapahoes of the Arkansas. Their route lies either through the Crow country, and the Black Hills, or through the lands of the Nez Percés, Flatheads, Bannacks, and Shoshonies. As they enjoy their favorite state of hostility with all these tribes, their expeditions are prone to be conducted in the most lawless and predatory style; nor do they hesitate to extend their maraudings to any party of white men they meet with; following their trails; hovering about their camps; waylaying and dogging the caravans of the free traders, and murdering

the solitary trapper. The consequences are, frequent and desperate fights between them and the "mountaineers," in the wild defiles and fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains.

The band in question was, at this time, on their way homeward from one of their customary visits to the Arapahoes; and in the ensuing chapter, we shall treat of some bloody encounters between them and the trappers, which had taken place just before the arrival of Captain Bonneville among the mountains.

CHAPTER VI.

SUBLETTE AND HIS BAND.—ROBERT CAMPBELL.—MR. WYETH AND A BAND OF "DOWN-EASTERS."—YANKEE ENTERPRIZE.—FITZPATRICK.—HIS ADVENTURE WITH THE BLACKFEET.—A RENDEZVOUS OF MOUNTAINEERS.—THE BATTLE OF PIERRE'S HOLE.—AN INDIAN AMBUSCADE.—SUBLETTE'S RETURN.

LEAVING Captain Bonneville and his band ensconced within their fortified camp in the Green River Valley, we shall step back and accompany a party of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company in its progress, with supplies from St. Louis, to the annual rendezvous at Pierre's Hole. This party consisted of sixty men, well mounted, and conducting a line of pack-horses. They were commanded by Captain William Sublette, a partner in the company, and one of the most active, intrepid, and renowned leaders in this half military kind of service. He was accompanied by his associate in business, and tried companion in danger, Mr. Robert Campbell, one of the pioneers of the trade beyond the mountains, who had commanded trapping parties there in times of the greatest peril.

As these worthy compeers were on their route to the frontier, they fell in with another expedition, likewise on

its way to the mountains. This was a party of regular "Down-easters," that is to say, people of New England, who, with the all-penetrating and all-pervading spirit of their race, were now pushing their way into a new field of enterprise, with which they were totally unacquainted. The party had been fitted out, and was maintained and commanded by Mr. Nathaniel J. Wyeth, of Boston.* This gentleman had conceived an idea, that a profitable fishery for salmon might be established on the Columbia River, and connected with the fur trade. He had, accordingly, invested capital in goods, calculated, as he supposed, for the Indian trade, and had enlisted a number of Eastern men in his employ, who had never been in the Far West, nor knew anything of the wilderness. With these, he was bravely steering his way across the continent, undismayed by danger, difficulty, or distance, in the same way that a New England coaster and his neighbors will coolly launch forth on a voyage to the Black Sea, or a whaling cruise to the Pacific.

With all their national aptitude at expedient and resource, Wyeth and his men felt themselves completely at a loss when they reached the frontier, and found that the wilderness required experience and habitudes of which they were totally deficient. Not one of the party, excepting the leader, had ever seen an Indian or handled a rifle; they were without guide or interpreter, and totally

* In the former editions of this work we have erroneously given this enterprising individual the title of captain.

unacquainted with "wood craft," and the modes of making their way among savage hordes, and subsisting themselves during long marches over wild mountains and barren plains.

In this predicament, Captain Sublette found them, in a manner becalmed, or rather run aground, at the little frontier town of Independence, in Missouri, and kindly took them in tow. The two parties travelled amicably together; the frontier men of Sublette's party gave their Yankee comrades some lessons in hunting, and some insight into the art and mystery of dealing with the Indians, and they all arrived without accident at the upper branches of the Nebraska or Platte River.

In the course of their march, Mr. Fitzpatrick, the partner of the company who was resident at that time beyond the mountains, came down from the rendezvous at Pierre's Hole to meet them, and hurry them forward. He travelled in company with them until they reached the Sweet Water; then taking a couple of horses, one for the saddle, and the other as a pack-horse, he started off express for Pierre's Hole, to make arrangements against their arrival, that he might commence his hunting campaign before the rival company.

Fitzpatrick was a hardy and experienced mountaineer, and knew all the passes and defiles. As he was pursuing his lonely course up the Green River Valley, he descried several horsemen at a distance, and came to a halt to reconnoitre. He supposed them to be some de-

tachment from the rendezvous, or a party of friendly Indians. They perceived him, and setting up the war-whoop, dashed forward at full speed: he saw at once his mistake and his peril—they were Blackfeet. Springing upon his fleetest horse, and abandoning the other to the enemy, he made for the mountains, and succeeded in escaping up one of the most dangerous defiles. Here he concealed himself until he thought the Indians had gone off, when he returned into the valley. He was again pursued, lost his remaining horse, and only escaped by scrambling up among the cliffs. For several days he remained lurking among rocks and precipices, and almost famished, having but one remaining charge in his rifle, which he kept for self-defense.

In the meantime, Sublette and Campbell, with their fellow-traveller, Wyeth, had pursued their march unmolested, and arrived in the Green River Valley, totally unconscious that there was any lurking enemy at hand. They had encamped one night on the banks of a small stream, which came down from the Wind River Mountains, when about midnight, a band of Indians burst upon their camp, with horrible yells and whoops, and a discharge of guns and arrows. Happily no other harm was done than wounding one mule, and causing several horses to break loose from their pickets. The camp was instantly in arms; but the Indians retreated with yells of exultation, carrying off several of the horses, under covert of the night.

This was somewhat of a disagreeable foretaste of mountain life to some of Wyeth's band, accustomed only to the regular and peaceful life of New England; nor was it altogether to the taste of Captain Sublette's men, who were chiefly creoles and townsmen from St. Louis. They continued their march the next morning, keeping scouts ahead and upon their flanks, and arrived without further molestation at Pierre's Hole.

The first inquiry of Captain Sublette, on reaching the rendezvous, was for Fitzpatrick. He had not arrived, nor had any intelligence been received concerning him. Great uneasiness was now entertained, lest he should have fallen into the hands of the Blackfeet, who had made the midnight attack upon the camp. It was a matter of general joy, therefore, when he made his appearance, conducted by two half-breed Iroquois hunters. He had lurked for several days among the mountains, until almost starved; at length he escaped the vigilance of his enemies in the night, and was so fortunate as to meet the two Iroquois hunters, who, being on horseback, conveyed him without further difficulty to the rendezvous. He arrived there so emaciated that he could scarcely be recognized.

The valley called Pierre's Hole is about thirty miles in length and fifteen in width, bounded to the west and south by low and broken ridges, and overlooked to the east by three lofty mountains, called the three Tetons, which domineer as landmarks over a vast extent of country.

A fine stream, fed by rivulets and mountain springs, pours through the valley towards the north, dividing it into nearly equal parts. The meadows on its borders are broad and extensive, covered with willow and cottonwood trees, so closely interlocked and matted together, as to be nearly impassable.

In this valley was congregated the motley populace connected with the fur trade. Here the two rival companies had their encampments, with their retainers of all kinds: traders, trappers, hunters, and half-breeds, assembled from all quarters, awaiting their yearly supplies, and their orders to start off in new directions. Here, also, the savage tribes connected with the trade, the Nez Percés or Chopunnish Indians, and Flatheads, had pitched their lodges beside the streams, and with their squaws awaited the distribution of goods and finery. There was, moreover, a band of fifteen free trappers, commanded by a gallant leader from Arkansas, named Sinclair, who held their encampment a little apart from the rest. Such was the wild and heterogeneous assemblage, amounting to several hundred men, civilized and savage, distributed in tents and lodges in the several camps.

The arrival of Captain Sublette with supplies put the Rocky Mountain Fur Company in full activity. The wares and merchandise were quickly opened, and as quickly disposed of to trappers and Indians; the usual excitement and revelry took place, after which, all hands began to disperse to their several destinations.

On the 17th of July, a small brigade of fourteen trappers, led by Milton Sublette, brother of the captain, set out with the intention of proceeding to the southwest. They were accompanied by Sinclair and his fifteen free trappers; Wyeth, also, and his New England band of beaver hunters and salmon fishers, now dwindled down to eleven, took this opportunity to prosecute their cruise in the wilderness, accompanied with such experienced pilots. On the first day, they proceeded about eight miles to the southeast, and encamped for the night, still in the valley of Pierre's Hole. On the following morning, just as they were raising their camp, they observed a long line of people pouring down a defile of the mountains. They at first supposed them to be Fontenelle and his party, whose arrival had been daily expected. Wyeth, however, reconnoitred them with a spy-glass, and soon perceived they were Indians. They were divided into two parties, forming, in the whole, about one hundred and fifty persons, men, women, and children. Some were on horseback, fantastically painted and arrayed, with scarlet blankets fluttering in the wind. The greater part, however, were on foot. They had perceived the trappers before they were themselves discovered, and came down yelling and whooping into the plain. On nearer approach, they were ascertained to be Blackfeet.

One of the trappers of Sublette's brigade, a half-breed, named Antoine Godin, now mounted his horse, and rode forth as if to hold a conference. He was the son of an

Iroquois hunter, who had been cruelly murdered by the Blackfeet at a small stream below the mountains, which still bears his name. In company with Antoine rode forth a Flathead Indian, whose once powerful tribe had been completely broken down in their wars with the Blackfeet. Both of them, therefore, cherished the most vengeful hostility against these marauders of the mountains. The Blackfeet came to a halt. One of the chiefs advanced singly and unarmed, bearing the pipe of peace. This overture was certainly pacific; but Antoine and the Flathead were predisposed to hostility, and pretended to consider it a treacherous movement.

"Is your piece charged?" said Antoine, to his red companion.

"It is."

"Then cock it, and follow me."

They met the Blackfoot chief half way, who extended his hand in friendship. Antoine grasped it.

"Fire!" cried he.

The Flathead levelled his piece, and brought the Blackfoot to the ground. Antoine snatched off his scarlet blanket, which was richly ornamented, and galloped off with it as a trophy to the camp, the bullets of the enemy whistling after him. The Indians immediately threw themselves into the edge of a swamp, among willows and cotton-wood trees, interwoven with vines. Here they began to fortify themselves; the women digging a trench, and throwing up a breastwork of logs and

branches, deep hid in the bosom of the wood, while the warriors skirmished at the edge to keep the trappers at bay.

The latter took their station in a ravine in front, whence they kept up a scattering fire. As to Wyeth, and his little band of "Down-easters," they were perfectly astounded by this second specimen of life in the wilderness; the men, being especially unused to bush-fighting and the use of the rifle, were at a loss how to proceed. Wyeth, however, acted as a skillful commander. He got all his horses into camp and secured them; then, making a breastwork of his packs of goods, he charged his men to remain in garrison, and not to stir out of their fort. For himself, he mingled with the other leaders, determined to take his share in the conflict.

In the meantime, an express had been sent off to the rendezvous for reinforcements. Captain Sublette, and his associate, Campbell, were at their camp when the express came galloping across the plain, waving his cap, and giving the alarm; "Blackfeet! Blackfeet! a fight in the upper part of the valley!—to arms! to arms!"

The alarm was passed from camp to camp. It was a common cause. Every one turned out with horse and rifle. The Nez Percés and Flatheads joined. As fast as horsemen could arm and mount they galloped off; the valley was soon alive with white men and red men scouring at full speed.

Sublette ordered his men to keep to the camp, being

recruits from St. Louis, and unused to Indian warfare. He and his friend Campbell prepared for action. Throwing off their coats, rolling up their sleeves, and arming themselves with pistols and rifles, they mounted their horses and dashed forward among the first. As they rode along, they made their wills in soldier-like style; each stating how his effects should be disposed of in case of his death, and appointing the other his executor.

The Blackfeet warriors had supposed the brigade of Milton Sublette all the foe they had to deal with, and were astonished to behold the whole valley suddenly swarming with horsemen, galloping to the field of action. They withdrew into their fort, which was completely hid from sight in the dark and tangled wood. Most of their women and children had retreated to the mountains. The trappers now sallied forth and approached the swamp, firing into the thickets at random; the Blackfeet had a better sight at their adversaries, who were in the open field, and a half-breed was wounded in the shoulder.

When Captain Sublette arrived, he urged to penetrate the swamp and storm the fort, but all hung back in awe of the dismal horrors of the place, and the danger of attacking such desperadoes in their savage den. The very Indian allies, though accustomed to bush-fighting, regarded it as almost impenetrable, and full of frightful danger. Sublette was not to be turned from his purpose, but offered to lead the way into the swamp. Campbell stepped forward to accompany him. Before enter-

ing the perilous wood, Sublette took his brothers aside, and told them that in case he fell, Campbell, who knew his will, was to be his executor. This done, he grasped his rifle and pushed into the thickets, followed by Campbell. Sinclair, the partisan from Arkansas, was at the edge of the wood with his brother and a few of his men. Excited by the gallant example of the two friends, he pressed forward to share their dangers.

The swamp was produced by the labors of the beaver, which, by damming up a stream, had inundated a portion of the valley. The place was all overgrown with woods and thickets, so closely matted and entangled, that it was impossible to see ten paces ahead, and the three associates in peril had to crawl along, one after another, making their way by putting the branches and vines aside; but doing it with caution, lest they should attract the eye of some lurking marksman. They took the lead by turns, each advancing about twenty yards at a time, and now and then hallooing to their men to follow. Some of the latter gradually entered the swamp, and followed a little distance in the rear.

They had now reached a more open part of the wood, and had glimpses of the rude fortress from between the trees. It was a mere breastwork, as we have said, of logs and branches, with blankets, buffalo robes, and the leathern covers of lodges, extended round the top as a screen. The movements of the leaders, as they groped their way, had been descried by the sharp-sighted

enemy. As Sinclair, who was in the advance, was putting some branches aside, he was shot through the body. He fell on the spot. "Take me to my brother," said he to Campbell. The latter gave him in charge to some of the men, who conveyed him out of the swamp.

Sublette now took the advance. As he was reconnoitering the fort, he perceived an Indian peeping through an aperture. In an instant his rifle was levelled and discharged, and the ball struck the savage in the eye. While he was reloading, he called to Campbell, and pointed out to him the hole; "Watch that place," said he, "and you will soon have a fair chance for a shot." Scarce had he uttered the words, when a ball struck him in the shoulder, and almost wheeled him round. His first thought was to take hold of his arm with his other hand, and move it up and down. He ascertained, to his satisfaction, that the bone was not broken. The next moment he was so faint that he could not stand. Campbell took him in his arms and carried him out of the thicket. The same shot that struck Sublette, wounded another man in the head.

A brisk fire was now opened by the mountaineers from the wood, answered occasionally from the fort. Unluckily, the trappers and their allies, in searching for the fort, had got scattered, so that Wyeth, and a number of Nez Percés, approached the fort on the northwest side, while others did the same on the opposite quarter. A cross-fire thus took place, which occasionally did mis-

chief to friends as well as foes. An Indian was shot down, close to Wyeth, by a ball which, he was convinced, had been sped from the rifle of a trapper on the other side of the fort.

The number of whites and their Indian allies, had by this time so much increased by arrivals from the rendezvous, that the Blackfeet were completely overmatched. They kept doggedly in their fort, however, making no offer of surrender. An occasional firing into the breastwork was kept up during the day. Now and then, one of the Indian allies, in bravado, would rush up to the fort, fire over the ramparts, tear off a buffalo robe or a scarlet blanket, and return with it in triumph to his comrades. Most of the savage garrison that fell, however, were killed in the first part of the attack.

At one time it was resolved to set fire to the fort; and the squaws belonging to the allies were employed to collect combustibles. This, however, was abandoned; the Nez Percés being unwilling to destroy the robes and blankets, and other spoils of the enemy, which they felt sure would fall into their hands.

The Indians, when fighting, are prone to taunt and revile each other. During one of the pauses of the battle, the voice of the Blackfeet chief was heard.

"So long," said he, "as we had powder and ball, we fought you in the open field: when those were spent, we retreated here to die with our women and children. You may burn us in our fort; but, stay by our ashes, and you

who are so hungry for fighting, will soon have enough. There are four hundred lodges of our brethren at hand. They will soon be here—their arms are strong—their hearts are big—they will avenge us!"

This speech was translated two or three times by Nez Percé and creole interpreters. By the time it was rendered into English, the chief was made to say, that four hundred lodges of his tribe were attacking the encampment at the other end of the valley. Every one now was for hurrying to the defense of the rendezvous. A party was left to keep watch upon the fort; the rest galloped off to the camp. As night came on, the trappers drew out of the swamp, and remained about the skirts of the wood. By morning, their companions returned from the rendezvous, with the report that all was safe. As the day opened, they ventured within the swamp and approached the fort. All was silent. They advanced up to it without opposition. They entered: it had been abandoned in the night, and the Blackfeet had effected their retreat, carrying off their wounded on litters made of branches, leaving bloody traces on the herbage. The bodies of ten Indians were found within the fort: among them the one shot in the eye by Sublette. The Blackfeet afterwards reported that they had lost twenty-six warriors in this battle. Thirty-two horses were likewise found killed; among them were some of those recently carried off from Sublette's party, in the night; which showed that these were the very savages that had at-

tacked him. They proved to be an advance party of the main body of Blackfeet, which had been upon the trail of Sublette's party. Five white men and one half-breed were killed, and several wounded. Seven of the Nez Percés were also killed, and six wounded. They had an old chief, who was reputed as invulnerable. In the course of the action he was hit by a spent ball, and threw up blood; but his skin was unbroken. His people were now fully convinced that he was proof against powder and ball.

A striking circumstance is related as having occurred the morning after the battle. As some of the trappers and their Indian allies were approaching the fort, through the woods, they beheld an Indian woman, of noble form and features, leaning against a tree. Their surprise at her lingering here alone, to fall into the hands of her enemies, was dispelled, when they saw the corpse of a warrior at her feet. Either she was so lost in grief as not to perceive their approach, or a proud spirit kept her silent and motionless. The Indians set up a yell, on discovering her, and before the trappers could interfere, her mangled body fell upon the corpse which she had refused to abandon. We have heard this anecdote discredited by one of the leaders who had been in the battle, but the fact may have taken place without his seeing it, and been concealed from him. It is an instance of female devotion, even to the death, which we are well disposed to believe and to record.

After the battle, the brigade of Milton Sublette, together with the free trappers, and Wyeth's New England band, remained some days at the rendezvous, to see if the main body of Blackfeet intended to make an attack; nothing of the kind occurring, they once more put themselves in motion, and proceeded on their route towards the southwest.

Captain Sublette having distributed his supplies, had intended to set off on his return to St. Louis, taking with him the peltries collected from the trappers and Indians. His wound, however, obliged him to postpone his departure. Several who were to have accompanied him, became impatient of this delay. Among these was a young Bostonian, Mr. Joseph More, one of the followers of Mr. Wyeth, who had seen enough of mountain life and savage warfare, and was eager to return to the abodes of civilization. He and six others, among whom were a Mr. Foy, of Mississippi, Mr. Alfred K. Stephens, of St. Louis, and two grandsons of the celebrated Daniel Boon, set out together, in advance of Sublette's party, thinking they would make their own way through the mountains.

It was just five days after the battle of the swamp, that these seven companions were making their way through Jackson's Hole, a valley not far from the three Tetons, when, as they were descending a hill, a party of Blackfeet that lay in ambush started up with terrific yells. The horse of the young Bostonian, who was in front,

wheeled round with affright, and threw his unskillful rider. The young man scrambled up the side of the hill, but, unaccustomed to such wild scenes, lost his presence of mind, and stood, as if paralyzed, on the edge of a bank, until the Blackfeet came up and slew him on the spot. His comrades had fled on the first alarm; but two of them, Foy and Stephens, seeing his danger, paused when they had got half way up the hill, turned back, dismounted, and hastened to his assistance. Foy was instantly killed. Stephens was severely wounded, but escaped, to die five days afterwards. The survivors returned to the camp of Captain Sublette, bringing tidings of this new disaster. That hardy leader, as soon as he could bear the journey, set out on his return to St. Louis, accompanied by Campbell. As they had a number of pack-horses richly laden with peltries to convoy, they chose a different route through the mountains, out of the way, as they hoped, of the lurking bands of Blackfeet. They succeeded in making the frontier in safety. We remember to have seen them with their band, about two or three months afterwards, passing through a skirt of woodland in the upper part of Missouri. Their long cavalcade stretched in single file for nearly half a mile. Sublette still wore his arm in a sling. The mountaineers in their rude hunting dresses, armed with rifles, and roughly mounted, and leading their pack-horses down a hill of the forest, looked like banditti returning with plunder. On the top of some of

the packs were perched several half-breed children, perfect little imps, with wild black eyes glaring from among elf locks. These, I was told, were children of the trappers: pledges of love from their squaw spouses in the wilderness.

CHAPTER VII.

RETREAT OF THE BLACKFEET.—FONTENELLE'S CAMP IN DANGER.—CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE AND THE BLACKFEET.—FREE TRAPPERS—THEIR CHARACTER, HABITS, DRESS, EQUIPMENTS, HORSES.—GAME FELLOWS OF THE MOUNTAINS —THEIR VISIT TO THE CAMP.—GOOD FELLOWSHIP AND GOOD CHEER.—A CAROUSE.—A SWAGGER, A BRAWL, AND A RECONCILIATION.

THE Blackfeet warriors, when they effected their midnight retreat from their wild fastness in Pierre's Hole, fell back into the valley of the Seeds-ke-dee, or Green River, where they joined the main body of their band. The whole force amounted to several hundred fighting men, gloomy and exasperated by their late disaster. They had with them their wives and children, which incapacitated them for any bold and extensive enterprise of a warlike nature; but when, in the course of their wanderings, they came in sight of the encampment of Fontenelle, who had moved some distance up Green River Valley in search of the free trappers, they put up tremendous war-cries, and advanced fiercely as if to attack it. Second thoughts caused them to moderate their fury. They recollected the severe lesson just received, and could not but remark the strength of Fon-

tenelle's position; which had been chosen with great judgment.

A formal talk ensued. The Blackfeet said nothing of the late battle, of which Fontenelle had as yet received no accounts; the latter, however, knew the hostile and perfidious nature of these savages, and took care to inform them of the encampment of Captain Bonneville, that they might know there were more white men in the neighborhood.

The conference ended, Fontenelle sent a Delaware Indian of his party to conduct fifteen of the Blackfeet to the camp of Captain Bonneville. There were at that time two Crow Indians in the captain's camp, who had recently arrived there. They looked with dismay at this deputation from their implacable enemies, and gave the captain a terrible character of them, assuring him that the best thing he could possibly do, was to put those Blackfeet deputies to death on the spot. The captain, however, who had heard nothing of the conflict at Pierre's Hole, declined all compliance with this sage counsel. He treated the grim warriors with his usual urbanity. They passed some little time at the camp; saw, no doubt, that everything was conducted with military skill and vigilance; and that such an enemy was not to be easily surprised, nor to be molested with impunity, and then departed, to report all that they had seen to their comrades.

The two scouts which Captain Bonneville had sent out

to seek for the band of free trappers, expected by Fontenelle, and to invite them to his camp, had been successful in their search, and on the 12th of August those worthies made their appearance. To explain the meaning of the appellation, free trapper, it is necessary to state the terms on which the men enlist in the service of the fur companies. Some have regular wages, and are furnished with weapons, horses, traps, and other requisites. These are under command, and bound to do every duty required of them connected with the service; such as hunting, trapping, loading and unloading the horses, mounting guard; and, in short, all the drudgery of the camp. These are the hired trappers.

The free trappers are a more independent class; and in describing them, we shall do little more than transcribe the graphic description of them by Captain Bonneville. "They come and go," says he, "when and where they please; provide their own horses, arms, and other equipments; trap and trade on their own account, and dispose of their skins and peltries to the highest bidder. Sometimes, in a dangerous hunting ground, they attach themselves to the camp of some trader for protection. Here they come under some restrictions; they have to conform to the ordinary rules for trapping, and to submit to such restraints, and to take part in such general duties, as are established for the good order and safety of the camp. In return for this protection, and for their camp keeping, they are bound to dispose of all the beaver

they take, to the trader who commands the camp, at a certain rate per skin; or, should they prefer seeking a market elsewhere, they are to make him an allowance, of from thirty to forty dollars for the whole hunt.

There is an inferior order, who, either from prudence or poverty, come to these dangerous hunting grounds without horses or accoutrements, and are furnished by the traders. These, like the hired trappers, are bound to exert themselves to the utmost in taking beaver, which, without skinning, they render in at the trader's lodge, where a stipulated price for each is placed to their credit. These, though generally included in the generic name of free trappers, have the more specific title of skin trappers.

The wandering whites who mingle for any length of time with the savages, have invariably a proneness to adopt savage habitudes; but none more so than the free trappers. It is a matter of vanity and ambition with them to discard everything that may bear the stamp of civilized life, and to adopt the manners, habits, dress, gesture, and even walk of the Indian. You cannot pay a free trapper a greater compliment, than to persuade him you have mistaken him for an Indian brave; and, in truth, the counterfeit is complete. His hair, suffered to attain to a great length, is carefully combed out, and either left to fall carelessly over his shoulders, or plaited neatly and tied up in otter skins, or parti-colored ribbons. A hunting-shirt of ruffled calico of bright dyes, or

of ornamented leather, falls to his knee; below which, curiously fashioned leggins, ornamented with strings, fringes, and a profusion of hawks' bells, reach to a costly pair of moccasins of the finest Indian fabric, richly embroidered with beads. A blanket of scarlet, or some other bright color, hangs from his shoulders, and is girt round his waist with a red sash, in which he bestows his pistols, knife, and the stem of his Indian pipe; preparations either for peace or war. His gun is lavishly decorated with brass tacks and vermilion, and provided with a fringed cover, occasionally of buckskin, ornamented here and there with a feather. His horse, the noble minister to the pride, pleasure, and profit of the mountaineer, is selected for his speed and spirit, and prancing gait, and holds a place in his estimation second only to himself. He shares largely of his bounty, and of his pride and pomp of trapping. He is caparisoned in the most dashing and fantastic style; the bridles and crupper are weightily embossed with beads and cockades; and head, mane, and tail are interwoven with abundance of eagles' plumes, which flutter in the wind. To complete this grotesque equipment, the proud animal is bestreaked and bespotted with vermilion, or with white clay, whichever presents the most glaring contrast to his real color.

Such is the account given by Captain Bonneville of these rangers of the wilderness, and their appearance at the camp was strikingly characteristic. They came dash-

ing forward at full speed, firing their fusees, and yelling in Indian style. Their dark sunburnt faces, and long flowing hair, their leggins, flaps, moccasins, and richly-dyed blankets, and their painted horses gaudily caparisoned, gave them so much the air and appearance of Indians, that it was difficult to persuade one's self that they were white men, and had been brought up in civilized life.

Captain Bonneville, who was delighted with the game look of these cavaliers of the mountains, welcomed them heartily to his camp, and ordered a free allowance of grog to regale them, which soon put them in the most braggart spirits. They pronounced the captain the finest fellow in the world, and his men all *bons garçons*, jovial lads, and swore they would pass the day with them. They did so; and a day it was, of boast, swagger, and rodomontade. The prime bullies and braves among the free trappers had each his circle of novices, from among the captain's band; mere greenhorns, men unused to Indian life; *mangeurs de lard*, or pork eaters; as such new-comers are superciliously called by the veterans of the wilderness. These he would astonish and delight by the hour, with prodigious tales of his doings among the Indians; and of the wonders he had seen, and the wonders he had performed, in his adventurous peregrinations among the mountains.

In the evening, the free trappers drew off, and returned to the camp of Fontenelle, highly delighted with their

visit and with their new acquaintances, and promising to return the following day. They kept their word: day after day their visits were repeated; they became "hail fellow well met" with Captain Bonneville's men; treat after treat succeeded, until both parties got most potently convinced, or rather confounded, by liquor. Now came on confusion and uproar. The free trappers were no longer suffered to have all the swagger to themselves. The camp bullies and prime trappers of the party began to ruffle up, and to brag, in turn, of their perils and achievements. Each now tried to out-boast and out-talk the other; a quarrel ensued as a matter of course, and a general fight, according to frontier usage. The two factions drew out their forces for a pitched battle. They fell to work and belabored each other with might and main; kicks and cuffs and dry blows were as well bestowed as they were well merited, until, having fought to their hearts' content, and been drubbed into a familiar acquaintance with each other's prowess and good qualities, they ended the fight by becoming firmer friends than they could have been rendered by a year's peaceable companionship.

While Captain Bonneville amused himself by observing the habits and characteristics of this singular class of men, and indulged them, for the time, in all their vagaries, he profited by the opportunity to collect from them information concerning the different parts of the country about which they had been accustomed to range;

the characters of the tribes, and, in short, everything important to his enterprise. He also succeeded in securing the services of several to guide and aid him in his peregrinations among the mountains, and to trap for him during the ensuing season. Having strengthened his party with such valuable recruits, he felt in some measure consoled for the loss of the Delaware Indians, decoyed from him by Mr. Fontenelle.

CHAPTER VIII.

PLANS FOR THE WINTER.—SALMON RIVER.—ABUNDANCE OF SALMON WEST OF THE MOUNTAINS.—NEW ARRANGEMENTS.—CACHES.—CERRÉ'S DETACHMENT.—MOVEMENTS IN FONTENELLE'S CAMP.—DEPARTURE OF THE BLACKFEET—THEIR FORTUNES.—WIND MOUNTAIN STREAMS.—BUCKEYE, THE DELAWARE HUNTER, AND THE GRIZZLY BEAR.—BONES OF MURDERED TRAVELLERS.—VISIT TO PIERRE'S HOLE.—TRACES OF THE BATTLE.—NEZ PERCÉ INDIANS.—ARRIVAL AT SALMON RIVER.

THE information derived from the free trappers determined Captain Bonneville as to his further movements. He learnt that in the Green River Valley the winters were severe, the snow frequently falling to the depth of several feet; and that there was no good wintering ground in the neighborhood. The upper part of Salmon River was represented as far more eligible, besides being in an excellent beaver country; and thither the captain resolved to bend his course.

The Salmon River is one of the upper branches of the Oregon or Columbia; and takes its rise from various sources, among a group of mountains to the northwest of the Wind River chain. It owes its name to the immense shoals of salmon which ascend it in the months of September and October. The salmon on the west side of

the Rocky Mountains are, like the buffalo on the eastern plains, vast migratory supplies for the wants of man, that come and go with the seasons. As the buffalo in countless throngs find their certain way in the transient pasturage on the prairies, along the fresh banks of the rivers, and up every valley and green defile of the mountains, so the salmon, at their allotted seasons, regulated by a sublime and all-seeing Providence, swarm in myriads up the great rivers, and find their way up their main branches, and into the minutest tributary streams; so as to pervade the great arid plains, and to penetrate even among barren mountains. Thus wandering tribes are fed in the desert places of the wilderness, where there is no herbage for the animals of the chase, and where, but for these periodical supplies, it would be impossible for man to subsist.

The rapid currents of the rivers which run into the Pacific render the ascent of them very exhausting to the salmon. When the fish first run up the rivers, they are fat and in fine order. The struggle against impetuous streams and frequent rapids gradually renders them thin and weak, and great numbers are seen floating down the rivers on their backs. As the season advances and the water becomes chilled, they are flung in myriads on the shores, where the wolves and bears assemble to banquet on them. Often they rot in such quantities along the river banks, as to taint the atmosphere. They are commonly from two to three feet long.

Captain Bonneville now made his arrangements for the autumn and the winter. The nature of the country through which he was about to travel rendered it impossible to proceed with wagons. He had more goods and supplies of various kinds, also, than were required for present purposes, or than could be conveniently transported on horseback; aided, therefore, by a few confidential men, he made *caches*, or secret pits, during the night, when all the rest of the camp were asleep, and in these deposited the superfluous effects, together with the wagons. All traces of the caches were then carefully obliterated. This is a common expedient with the traders and trappers of the mountains. Having no established posts and magazines, they make these caches or deposits at certain points, whither they repair occasionally, for supplies. It is an expedient derived from the wandering tribes of Indians.

Many of the horses were still so weak and lame as to be unfit for a long scramble through the mountains. These were collected into one cavalcade, and given in charge to an experienced trapper, of the name of Matthieu. He was to proceed westward, with a brigade of trappers, to Bear River; a stream to the west of the Green River or Colorado, where there was good pasturage for the horses. In this neighborhood it was expected he would meet the Shoshonie villages or bands,* on their yearly migrations,

* A *village* of Indians, in trappers' language, does not always imply a fixed community; but often a wandering horde or band. The Sho-sho-

with whom he was to trade for peltries and provisions. After he had traded with these people, finished his trappings, and recruited the strength of the horses, he was to proceed to Salmon River and rejoin Captain Bonneville, who intended to fix his quarters there for the winter.

While these arrangements were in progress in the camp of Captain Bonneville, there was a sudden bustle and stir in the camp of Fontenelle. One of the partners of the American Fur Company had arrived, in all haste, from the rendezvous at Pierre's Hole, in quest of the supplies. The competition between the two rival companies was just now at its height, and prosecuted with unusual zeal. The tramontane concerns of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company were managed by two resident partners, Fitzpatrick and Bridger; those of the American Fur Company, by Vanderburgh and Dripps. The latter were ignorant of the mountain regions, but trusted to make up by vigilance and activity for their want of knowledge of the country.

Fitzpatrick, an experienced trader and trapper, knew the evils of competition in the same hunting grounds, and had proposed that the two companies should divide the country, so as to hunt in different directions: this proposition being rejected, he had exerted himself to get first into the field. His exertions, as has already been

nies, like most of the mountain tribes, have no settled residences; but are a nomadic people, dwelling in tents or lodges, and shifting their encampments from place to place, according as fish and game abound.

shown, were effectual. The early arrival of Sublette, with supplies, had enabled the various brigades of the Rocky Mountain Company to start off to their respective hunting grounds. Fitzpatrick himself, with his associate, Bridger, had pushed off with a strong party of trappers, for a prime beaver country to the north-northwest.

This had put Vanderburgh upon his mettle. He had hastened on to meet Fontenelle. Finding him at his camp in Green River Valley, he immediately furnished himself with the supplies; put himself at the head of the free trappers and Delawares, and set off with all speed, determined to follow hard upon the heels of Fitzpatrick and Bridger. Of the adventures of these parties among the mountains, and the disastrous effects of their competition, we shall have occasion to treat in a future chapter.

Fontenelle having now delivered his supplies and accomplished his errand, struck his tents and set off on his return to the Yellowstone. Captain Bonneville and his band, therefore, remained alone in the Green River Valley; and their situation might have been perilous, had the Blackfeet band still lingered in the vicinity. Those marauders, however, had been dismayed at finding so many resolute and well-appointed parties of white men in this neighborhood. They had, therefore, abandoned this part of the country, passing over the head waters of the Green River, and bending their course towards the Yellowstone. Misfortune pursued them. Their route lay through the country of their deadly enemies, the

Crows. In the Wind River Valley, which lies east of the mountains, they were encountered by a powerful war party of that tribe, and completely put to rout. Forty of them were killed, many of their women and children captured, and the scattered fugitives hunted like wild beasts, until they were completely chased out of the Crow country.

On the 22d of August Captain Bonneville broke up his camp, and set out on his route for Salmon River. His baggage was arranged in packs, three to a mule, or pack-horse; one being disposed on each side of the animal, and one on the top; the three forming a load of from one hundred and eighty to two hundred and twenty pounds. This is the trappers' style of loading their pack-horses; his men, however, were inexpert at adjusting the packs; which were prone to get loose and slip off; so that it was necessary to keep a rear-guard to assist in reloading. A few days' experience, however, brought them into proper training.

Their march lay up the valley of the Seeds-ke-dee, overlooked to the right by the lofty peaks of the Wind River Mountains. From bright little lakes and fountain-heads of this remarkable bed of mountains, poured forth the tributary streams of the Seeks-ke-dee. Some came rushing down gullies and ravines; others tumbling in crystal cascades from inaccessible clefts and rocks, and others winding their way in rapid and pellucid currents across the valley, to throw themselves into the main

river. So transparent were these waters, that the trout with which they abounded could be seen gliding about as if in the air; and their pebbly beds were distinctly visible at the depth of many feet. This beautiful and diaphanous quality of the Rocky Mountain streams, prevails for a long time after they have mingled their waters and swollen into important rivers.

Issuing from the upper part of the valley, Captain Bonneville continued to the east-northeast, across rough and lofty ridges, and deep rocky defiles, extremely fatiguing both to man and horse. Among his hunters was a Delaware Indian who had remained faithful to him. His name was Buckeye. He had often prided himself on his skill and success in coping with the grizzly bear, that terror of the hunters. Though crippled in the left arm, he declared he had no hesitation to close with a wounded bear, and attack him with a sword. If armed with a rifle, he was willing to brave the animal when in full force and fury. He had twice an opportunity of proving his prowess, in the course of this mountain journey, and was each time successful. His mode was to seat himself upon the ground, with his rifle cocked and resting on his lame arm. Thus prepared, he would await the approach of the bear with perfect coolness, nor pull trigger until he was close at hand. In each instance, he laid the monster dead upon the spot.

A march of three or four days, through savage and lonely scenes, brought Captain Bonneville to the fatal

defile of Jackson's Hole, where poor More and Foy had been surprised and murdered by the Blackfeet. The feelings of the captain were shocked at beholding the bones of these unfortunate young men bleaching among the rocks; and he caused them to be decently interred.

On the third of September he arrived on the summit of a mountain which commanded a full view of the eventful valley of Pierre's Hole; whence he could trace the winding of its stream through green meadows and forests of willow and cotton-wood, and have a prospect, between distant mountains, of the lava plains of Snake River, dimly spread forth like a sleeping ocean below.

After enjoying this magnificent prospect, he descended into the valley, and visited the scenes of the late desperate conflict. There were the remains of the rude fortress in the swamp, shattered by rifle shot, and strewed with the mingled bones of savages and horses. There was the late populous and noisy rendezvous, with the traces of trappers' camps and Indian lodges; but their fires were extinguished, the motley assemblage of trappers and hunters, white traders and Indian braves, had all dispersed to different points of the wilderness, and the valley had relapsed into its pristine solitude and silence.

That night the captain encamped upon the battle ground; the next day he resumed his toilsome peregrinations through the mountains. For upwards of two weeks he continued his painful march; both men and

horses suffering excessively at times from hunger and thirst. At length, on the 19th of September, he reached the upper waters of Salmon River.

The weather was cold, and there were symptoms of an impending storm. The night set in, but Buckeye, the Delaware Indian, was missing. He had left the party early in the morning, to hunt by himself, according to his custom. Fears were entertained lest he should lose his way and become bewildered in tempestuous weather. These fears increased on the following morning, when a violent snow-storm came on, which soon covered the earth to the depth of several inches. Captain Bonneville immediately encamped, and sent out scouts in every direction. After some search Buckeye was discovered, quietly seated at a considerable distance in the rear, waiting the expected approach of the party, not knowing that they had passed, the snow having covered their trail.

On the ensuing morning they resumed their march at an early hour, but had not proceeded far when the hunters, who were beating up the country in the advance, came galloping back, making signals to encamp, and crying Indians! Indians!

Captain Bonneville immediately struck into a skirt of wood and prepared for action. The savages were now seen trooping over the hills in great numbers. One of them left the main body and came forward singly, making signals of peace. He announced them as a band of

Nez Percés* or Pierced-nosed Indians, friendly to the whites, whereupon an invitation was returned by Captain Bonneville, for them to come and encamp with him. They halted for a short time to make their toilette, an operation as important with an Indian warrior as with a fashionable beauty. This done, they arranged themselves in martial style, the chiefs leading the van, the braves following in a long line, painted and decorated, and topped off with fluttering plumes. In this way they advanced, shouting and singing, firing off their fusees, and clashing their shields. The two parties encamped hard by each other. The Nez Percés were on a hunting expedition, but had been almost famished on their march. They had no provisions left but a few dried salmon, yet finding the white men equally in want, they generously offered to share even this meagre pittance, and frequently repeated the offer, with an earnestness that left no doubt of their sincerity. Their generosity won the heart of Captain Bonneville, and produced the most cordial good-will on the part of his men. For two days that the parties remained in company, the most amicable intercourse prevailed, and they parted the best of friends. Captain Bonneville detached a few men, under Mr. Cerré, an able leader, to accompany the Nez

* We should observe that this tribe is universally called by its French name, which is pronounced by the trappers, *Nepercy*. There are two main branches of this tribe, the upper Nepercys and the lower Nepercys, as we shall show hereafter.

Percés on their hunting expedition, and to trade with them for meat for the winter's supply. After this, he proceeded down the river about five miles below the forks, when he came to a halt on the 26th of September, to establish his winter quarters.

CHAPTER IX.

HORSES TURNED LOOSE.—PREPARATIONS FOR WINTER QUARTERS.—HUNGRY TIMES.—NEZ PERCES, THEIR HONESTY, PIETY, PACIFIC HABITS, RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.—CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE'S CONVERSATIONS WITH THEM.—THEIR LOVE OF GAMBLING.

IT was gratifying to Captain Bonneville, after so long and toilsome a course of travel, to relieve his poor jaded horses of the burdens under which they were almost ready to give out, and to behold them rolling upon the grass, and taking a long repose after all their sufferings. Indeed, so exhausted were they, that those employed under the saddle were no longer capable of hunting for the daily subsistence of the camp.

All hands now set to work to prepare a winter cantonment. A temporary fortification was thrown up for the protection of the party; a secure and comfortable pen, into which the horses could be driven at night; and huts were built for the reception of the merchandise.

This done, Captain Bonneville made a distribution of his forces: twenty men were to remain with him in garrison to protect the property; the rest were organized

into three brigades, and sent off in different directions, to subsist themselves by hunting the buffalo, until the snow should become too deep.

Indeed, it would have been impossible to provide for the whole party in this neighborhood. It was at the extreme western limit of the buffalo range, and these animals had recently been completely hunted out of the neighborhood by the Nez Percés, so that, although the hunters of the garrison were continually on the alert, ranging the country round, they brought in scarce game sufficient to keep famine from the door. Now and then there was a scanty meal of fish or wild fowl, occasionally an antelope; but frequently the cravings of hunger had to be appeased with roots, or the flesh of wolves and muskrats. Rarely could the inmates of the cantonment boast of having made a full meal, and never of having wherewithal for the morrow. In this way they starved along until the 8th of October, when they were joined by a party of five families of Nez Percés, who in some measure reconciled them to the hardships of their situation, by exhibiting a lot still more destitute. A more forlorn set they had never encountered: they had not a morsel of meat or fish; nor anything to subsist on, excepting roots, wild rosebuds, the barks of certain plants, and other vegetable productions; neither had they any weapon for hunting or defense, excepting an old spear: yet the poor fellows made no murmur nor complaint; but seemed accustomed to their hard fare. If they could

not teach the white men their practical stoicism, they at least made them acquainted with the edible properties of roots and wild rosebuds, and furnished them a supply from their own store. The necessities of the camp at length became so urgent, that Captain Bonneville determined to dispatch a party to the Horse Prairie, a plain to the north of his cantonment, to procure a supply of provisions. When the men were about to depart, he proposed to the Nez Percés that they, or some of them, should join the hunting party. To his surprise, they promptly declined. He inquired the reason for their refusal, seeing that they were in nearly as starving a situation as his own people. They replied that it was a sacred day with them, and the Great Spirit would be angry should they devote it to hunting. They offered, however, to accompany the party if it would delay its departure until the following day; but this the pinching demands of hunger would not permit, and the detachment proceeded.

A few days afterwards, four of them signified to Captain Bonneville that they were about to hunt. "What!" exclaimed he, "without guns or arrows; and with only one old spear? What do you expect to kill?" They smiled among themselves, but made no answer. Preparatory to the chase, they performed some religious rites, and offered up to the Great Spirit a few short prayers for safety and success; then, having received the blessings of their wives, they leaped upon their

horses and departed, leaving the whole party of Christian spectators amazed and rebuked by this lesson of faith and dependence on a supreme and benevolent Being. "Accustomed," adds Captain Bonneville, "as I had heretofore been, to find the wretched Indian reveling in blood, and stained by every vice which can degrade human nature, I could scarcely realize the scene which I had witnessed. Wonder at such unaffected tenderness and piety, where it was least to have been sought, contended in all our bosoms with shame and confusion, at receiving such pure and wholesome instructions from creatures so far below us in all the arts and comforts of life." The simple prayers of the poor Indians were not unheard. In the course of four or five days they returned, laden with meat. Captain Bonneville was curious to know how they had attained such success with such scanty means. They gave him to understand that they had chased the herds of buffalo at full speed, until they tired them down, when they easily dispatched them with the spear, and made use of the same weapon to flay the carcasses. To carry through their lesson to their Christian friends, the poor savages were as charitable as they had been pious, and generously shared with them the spoils of their hunting; giving them food enough to last for several days.

A further and more intimate intercourse with this tribe gave Captain Bonneville still greater cause to admire their strong devotional feeling. "Simply to call

these people religious," says he, "would convey but a faint idea of the deep hue of piety and devotion which pervades their whole conduct. Their honesty is immaculate, and their purity of purpose, and their observance of the rites of their religion, are most uniform and remarkable. They are, certainly, more like a nation of saints than a horde of savages."

In fact, the antibelligerent policy of this tribe may have sprung from the doctrines of Christian charity, for it would appear that they had imbibed some notions of the Christian faith from Catholic missionaries and traders who had been among them. They even had a rude calendar of the fasts and festivals of the Romish Church, and some traces of its ceremonials. These have become blended with their own wild rites, and present a strange medley, civilized and barbarous. On the Sabbath, men, women, and children array themselves in their best style, and assemble round a pole erected at the head of the camp. Here they go through a wild fantastic ceremonial; strongly resembling the religious dance of the Shaking Quakers; but from its enthusiasm, much more striking and impressive. During the intervals of the ceremony, the principal chiefs, who officiate as priests, instruct them in their duties, and exhort them to virtue and good deeds.

"There is something antique and patriarchal," observes Captain Bonneville, "in this union of the offices of leader and priest; as there is in many of their cus-

toms and manners, which are all strongly imbued with religion."

The worthy captain, indeed, appears to have been strongly interested by this gleam of unlooked-for light amidst the darkness of the wilderness. He exerted himself, during his sojourn among this simple and well-disposed people, to inculcate, as far as he was able, the gentle and humanizing precepts of the Christian faith, and to make them acquainted with the leading points of its history; and it speaks highly for the purity and benignity of his heart, that he derived unmixed happiness from the task.

"Many a time," says he, "was my little lodge thronged, or rather piled with hearers, for they lay on the ground, one leaning over the other, until there was no further room, all listening with greedy ears to the wonders which the Great Spirit had revealed to the white man. No other subject gave them half the satisfaction, or commanded half the attention; and but few scenes in my life remain so freshly on my memory, or are so pleasurably recalled to my contemplation, as these hours of intercourse with a distant and benighted race in the midst of the desert."

The only excesses indulged in by this temperate and exemplary people, appear to be gambling and horse-racing. In these they engage with an eagerness that amounts to infatuation. Knots of gamblers will assemble before one of their lodge fires, early in the evening,

and remain absorbed in the chances and changes of the game until long after dawn of the following day. As night advances, they wax warmer and warmer. Bets increase in amount, one loss only serves to lead to a greater, until in the course of a single night's gambling, the richest chief may become the poorest varlet in the camp.

CHAPTER X.

BLACKFEET IN THE HORSE PRAIRIE.—SEARCH AFTER THE HUNTERS.—DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS.—A CARD PARTY IN THE WILDERNESS.—THE CARD PARTY INTERRUPTED.—"OLD SLEDGE," A LOSING GAME.—VISITORS TO THE CAMP.—IROQUOIS HUNTERS.—HANGING-EARED INDIANS.

N the 12th of October, two young Indians of the Nez Percé tribe arrived at Captain Bonneville's encampment. They were on their way homeward, but had been obliged to swerve from their ordinary route through the mountains, by deep snows. Their new route took them through the Horse Prairie. In traversing it, they had been attracted by the distant smoke of a camp fire, and, on stealing near to reconnoitre, had discovered a war party of Blackfeet. They had several horses with them; and, as they generally go on foot on warlike excursions, it was concluded that these horses had been captured in the course of their maraudings.

This intelligence awakened solicitude on the mind of Captain Bonneville, for the party of hunters whom he had sent to that neighborhood; and the Nez Percés, when informed of the circumstance, shook their heads, and declared their belief that the horses they had seen had been stolen from that very party.

Anxious for information on the subject, Captain Bonneville dispatched two hunters to beat up the country in that direction. They searched in vain; not a trace of the men could be found; but they got into a region destitute of game, where they were well-nigh famished. At one time, they were three entire days without a mouthful of food; at length they beheld a buffalo grazing at the foot of a mountain. After maneuvering so as to get within shot, they fired, but merely wounded him. He took to flight, and they followed him over hill and dale, with the eagerness and perseverance of starving men. A more lucky shot brought him to the ground. Stanfield sprang upon him, plunged his knife into his throat, and allayed his raging hunger by drinking his blood. A fire was instantly kindled beside the carcass, when the two hunters cooked, and ate again and again, until, perfectly gorged, they sank to sleep before their hunting fire. On the following morning they rose early, made another hearty meal, then loading themselves with buffalo meat, set out on their return to the camp, to report the fruitlessness of their mission.

At length, after six weeks' absence, the hunters made their appearance, and were received with joy, proportioned to the anxiety that had been felt on their account. They had hunted with success on the prairie, but, while busy drying buffalo meat, were joined by a few panic-stricken Flatheads, who informed them that a powerful band of Blackfeet were at hand. The hunters imme-

diately abandoned the dangerous hunting ground, and accompanied the Flatheads to their village. Here they found Mr. Cerré, and the detachment of hunters sent with him to accompany the hunting party of the Nez Percés.

After remaining some time at the village, until they supposed the Blackfeet to have left the neighborhood, they set off with some of Mr. Cerré's men, for the cantonment of Salmon River, where they arrived without accident. They informed Captain Bonneville, however, that not far from his quarters, they had found a wallet of fresh meat and a cord, which they supposed had been left by some prowling Blackfeet. A few days afterwards, Mr. Cerré, with the remainder of his men, likewise arrived at the cantonment.

Mr. Walker, one of the subleaders, who had gone with a band of twenty hunters, to range the country just beyond the Horse Prairie, had, likewise, his share of adventures with the all-pervading Blackfeet. At one of his encampments, the guard stationed to keep watch round the camp grew weary of their duty, and feeling a little too secure, and too much at home on these prairies, retired to a small grove of willows, to amuse themselves with a social game of cards, called "old sledge," which is as popular among these trampers of the prairies, as whist or ecarté among the polite circles of the cities. From the midst of their sport, they were suddenly roused by a discharge of fire-arms, and a shrill war-whoop. Starting

on their feet, and snatching up their rifles, they beheld in dismay their horses and mules already in possession of the enemy, who had stolen upon the camp unperceived, while they were spell-bound by the magic of "old sledge." The Indians sprang upon the animals bare-backed, and endeavored to urge them off under a galling fire, that did some execution. The mules, however, confounded by the hurly-burly, and disliking their new riders, kicked up their heels and dismounted half of them, in spite of their horsemanship. This threw the rest into confusion; they endeavored to protect their unhorsed comrades from the furious assaults of the whites; but, after a scene of "confusion worse confounded," horses and mules were abandoned, and the Indians betook themselves to the bushes. Here they quickly scratched holes in the earth about two feet deep, in which they prostrated themselves, and while thus screened from the shots of the white men, were enabled to make such use of their bows and arrows and fusees as to repulse their assailants, and to effect their retreat. This adventure threw a temporary stigma upon the game of "old sledge."

In the course of the autumn, four Iroquois hunters, driven by the snow from their hunting grounds, made their appearance at the cantonment. They were kindly welcomed, and during their sojourn made themselves useful in a variety of ways, being excellent trappers and first-rate woodsmen. They were of the remnants of a

party of Iroquois hunters, that came from Canada into these mountain regions many years previously, in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. They were led by a brave chieftain, named Pierre, who fell by the hands of the Blackfeet, and gave his name to the fated valley of Pierre's Hole. This branch of the Iroquois tribe has ever since remained among these mountains, at mortal enmity with the Blackfeet, and have lost many of their prime hunters in their feuds with that ferocious race. Some of them fell in with General Ashley, in the course of one of his gallant excursions into the wilderness, and have continued ever since in the employ of the company.

Among the motley visitors to the winter quarters of Captain Bonneville, was a party of Pends Oreilles (or Hanging-ears) and their chief. These Indians have a strong resemblance, in character and customs, to the Nez Percés. They amount to about three hundred lodges, and are well armed, and possess great numbers of horses. During the spring, summer, and autumn they hunt the buffalo about the head waters of the Missouri, Henry's Fork of the Snake River, and the northern branches of Salmon River. Their winter quarters are upon the Racine Amère, where they subsist upon roots and dried buffalo meat. Upon this river the Hudson's Bay Company have established a trading post, where the Pends Oreilles and the Flatheads bring their peltries to exchange for arms, clothing, and trinkets.

This tribe, like the Nez Percés, evince strong and

peculiar feelings of natural piety. Their religion is not a mere superstitious fear, like that of most savages; they evince abstract notions of morality, a deep reverence for an overruling Spirit, and a respect for the rights of their fellow-men. In one respect, their religion partakes of the pacific doctrines of the Quakers. They hold that the Great Spirit is displeased with all nations who wantonly engage in war; they abstain, therefore, from all aggressive hostilities. But though thus unoffending in their policy, they are called upon continually to wage defensive warfare, especially with the Blackfeet; with whom, in the course of their hunting expeditions, they come in frequent collision, and have desperate battles. Their conduct as warriors is without fear or reproach, and they can never be driven to abandon their hunting grounds.

Like most savages, they are firm believers in dreams, and in the power and efficacy of charms and amulets, or medicines, as they term them. Some of their braves, also, who have had numerous hair-breadth 'scapes, like the old Nez Percé chief in the battle of Pierre's Hole, are believed to wear a charmed life, and to be bullet proof. Of these gifted beings marvelous anecdotes are related, which are most potently believed by their fellow-savages, and sometimes almost credited by the white hunters.

CHAPTER XI.

RIVAL TRAPPING PARTIES.—MANEUVERING.—A DESPERATE GAME.—VANDERBURGH AND THE BLACKFEET.—DESERTED CAMP FIRE.—A DARK DEFILE.—AN INDIAN AMBUSH.—A FIERCE MELEÉ.—FATAL CONSEQUENCES.—FITZPATRICK AND BRIDGER.—TRAPPERS' PRECAUTIONS.—MEETING WITH THE BLACKFEET.—MORE FIGHTING.—ANECDOTE OF A YOUNG MEXICAN AND AN INDIAN GIRL.

WHILE Captain Bonneville and his men are sojourning among the Nez Percés, on Salmon River, we will inquire after the fortunes of those doughty rivals of the Rocky Mountains and American Fur Companies, who started off for the trapping grounds to the north-northwest.

Fitzpatrick and Bridger, of the former company, as we have already shown, having received their supplies, had taken the lead, and hoped to have the first sweep of the hunting ground. Vanderburgh and Dripps, however, the two resident partners of the opposite company, by extraordinary exertions, were enabled soon to put themselves upon their traces, and pressed forward with such speed as to overtake them just as they had reached the heart of the beaver country. In fact, being ignorant of the best trapping grounds, it was their object to follow on

and profit by the superior knowledge of the other party.

Nothing could equal the chagrin of Fitzpatrick and Bridger, at being dogged by their inexperienced rivals; especially after their offer to divide the country with them. They tried in every way to blind and baffle them; to steal a march upon them, or lead them on a wrong scent; but all in vain. Vanderburgh made up by activity and intelligence, for his ignorance of the country; was always wary, always on the alert; discovered every movement of his rivals, however secret, and was not to be eluded or misled.

Fitzpatrick and his colleague now lost all patience: since the others persisted in following them, they determined to give them an unprofitable chase, and to sacrifice the hunting season, rather than share the products with their rivals. They accordingly took up their line of march down the course of the Missouri, keeping the main Blackfoot trail, and tramping doggedly forward, without stopping to set a single trap. The others beat the hoof after them for some time, but by degrees began to perceive that they were on a wild-goose chase, and getting into a country perfectly barren to the trapper. They now came to a halt, and bethought themselves how to make up for lost time, and improve the remainder of the season. It was thought best to divide their forces and try different trapping grounds. While Dripps went in one direction, Vanderburgh, with about fifty men, pro-

ceeded in another. The latter, in his headlong march, had got into the very heart of the Blackfoot country, yet seems to have been unconscious of his danger. As his scouts were out one day, they came upon the traces of a recent band of savages. There were the deserted fires still smoking, surrounded by the carcasses of buffaloes just killed. It was evident a party of Blackfeet had been frightened from their hunting camp, and had retreated, probably to seek reinforcements. The scouts hastened back to the camp, and told Vanderburgh what they had seen. He made light of the alarm, and, taking nine men with him, galloped off to reconnoitre for himself. He found the deserted hunting camp just as they had represented it; there lay the carcasses of buffaloes, partly dismembered; there were the smouldering fires, still sending up their wreaths of smoke; everything bore traces of recent and hasty retreat; and gave reason to believe that the savages were still lurking in the neighborhood. With heedless daring, Vanderburgh put himself upon their trail, to trace them to their place of concealment. It led him over prairies, and through skirts of woodland, until it entered a dark and dangerous ravine. Vanderburgh pushed in, without hesitation, followed by his little band. They soon found themselves in a gloomy dell, between steep banks overhung with trees; where the profound silence was only broken by the tramp of their own horses.

Suddenly the horrid war-whoop burst on their ears,

mingled with the sharp report of rifles, and a legion of savages sprang from their concealments, yelling, and shaking their buffalo robes to frighten the horses. Vanderburgh's horse fell, mortally wounded by the first discharge. In his fall, he pinned his rider to the ground; who called in vain upon his men to assist in extricating him. One was shot down and scalped a few paces distant; most of the others were severely wounded, and sought their safety in flight. The savages approached to dispatch the unfortunate leader, as he lay struggling beneath his horse. He had still his rifle in his hand, and his pistols in his belt. The first savage that advanced received the contents of the rifle in his breast, and fell dead upon the spot; but before Vanderburgh could draw a pistol, a blow from a tomahawk laid him prostrate, and he was dispatched by repeated wounds.

Such was the fate of Major Henry Vanderburgh: one of the best and worthiest leaders of the American Fur Company; who, by his manly bearing and dauntless courage, is said to have made himself universally popular among the bold-hearted rovers of the wilderness.

Those of the little band who escaped fled in consternation to the camp, and spread direful reports of the force and ferocity of the enemy. The party, being without a head, were in complete confusion and dismay, and made a precipitate retreat, without attempting to recover the remains of their butchered leader. They made no halt until they reached the encampment of the Pends

Oreilles, or Hanging-ears, where they offered a reward for the recovery of the body, but without success; it never could be found.

In the meantime Fitzpatrick and Bridger, of the Rocky Mountain Company, fared but little better than their rivals. In their eagerness to mislead them, they had betrayed themselves into danger, and got into a region infested with the Blackfeet. They soon found that foes were on the watch for them; but they were experienced in Indian warfare, and not to be surprised at night, nor drawn into an ambush in the day-time. As the evening advanced, the horses were all brought in and picketed, and a guard was stationed round the camp. At the earliest streak of day one of the leaders would mount his horse, and gallop off full speed for about half a mile; then look round for Indian trails, to ascertain whether there had been any lurkers round the camp: returning slowly, he would reconnoitre every ravine and thicket where there might be an ambush. This done, he would gallop off in an opposite direction and repeat the same scrutiny. Finding all things safe, the horses would be turned loose to graze, but always under the eye of a guard.

A caution equally vigilant was observed in the march, on approaching any defile or place where an enemy might lie in wait; and scouts were always kept in the advance, or along the ridges and rising grounds on the flanks.

At length, one day, a large band of Blackfeet appeared in the open field, but in the vicinity of rocks and cliffs. They kept at a wary distance, but made friendly signs. The trappers replied in the same way, but likewise kept aloof. A small party of Indians now advanced, bearing the pipe of peace; they were met by an equal number of white men, and they formed a group, midway between the two bands, where the pipe was circulated from hand to hand, and smoked with all due ceremony. An instance of natural affection took place at this pacific meeting. Among the free trappers in the Rocky Mountain band, was a spirited young Mexican, named Loretto; who, in the course of his wanderings, had ransomed a beautiful Blackfoot girl from a band of Crows by whom she had been captured. He made her his wife, after the Indian style, and she had followed his fortunes ever since, with the most devoted affection.

Among the Blackfeet warriors who advanced with the calumet of peace, she recognized a brother. Leaving her infant with Loretto, she rushed forward and threw herself upon her brother's neck; who clasped his long-lost sister to his heart, with a warmth of affection but little compatible with the reputed stoicism of the savage.

While this scene was taking place, Bridger left the main body of trappers, and rode slowly towards the group of smokers, with his rifle resting across the pommel of his saddle. The chief of the Blackfeet stepped forward to meet him. From some unfortunate feeling of

distrust, Bridger cocked his rifle just as the chief was extending his hand in friendship. The quick ear of the savage caught the click of the lock; in a twinkling, he grasped the barrel, forcing the muzzle downward, and the contents were discharged into the earth at his feet. His next movement was to wrest the weapon from the hand of Bridger, and fell him with it to the earth. He might have found this no easy task, had not the unfortunate leader received two arrows in his back during the struggle.

The chief now sprang into the vacant saddle and galloped off to his band. A wild hurry-skurry scene ensued; each party took to the banks, the rocks, and trees, to gain favorable positions, and an irregular firing was kept up on either side, without much effect. The Indian girl had been hurried off by her people, at the outbreak of the affray. She would have returned, through the dangers of the fight, to her husband and her child, but was prevented by her brother. The young Mexican saw her struggles and her agony, and heard her piercing cries. With a generous impulse, he caught up the child in his arms, rushed forward, regardless of Indian shaft or rifle, and placed it in safety upon her bosom. Even the savage heart of the Blackfoot chief was reached by this noble deed. He pronounced Loretto a madman for his temerity, but bade him depart in peace. The young Mexican hesitated: he urged to have his wife restored to him, but her brother interfered, and the countenance of

the chief grew dark. The girl, he said, belonged to his tribe—she must remain with her people. Loretto would still have lingered, but his wife implored him to depart, lest his life should be endangered. It was with the greatest reluctance that he returned to his companions.

The approach of night put an end to the skirmishing fire of the adverse parties, and the savages drew off without renewing their hostilities. We cannot but remark, that both in this affair and in that of Pierre's Hole, the affray commenced by a hostile act on the part of white men, at the moment when the Indian warrior was extending the hand of amity. In neither instance, as far as circumstances have been stated to us by different persons, do we see any reason to suspect the savage chiefs of perfidy in their overtures of friendship. They advanced in the confiding way, usual among Indians when they bear the pipe of peace, and consider themselves sacred from attack. If we violate the sanctity of this ceremonial, by any hostile movement on our part, it is we who incur the charge of faithlessness; and we doubt not that in both these instances the white men have been considered by the Blackfeet as the aggressors, and have, in consequence, been held up as men not to be trusted.

A word to conclude the romantic incident of Loretto and his Indian bride. A few months subsequent to the event just related, the young Mexican settled his accounts with the Rocky Mountain Company, and obtained his discharge. He then left his comrades and set off to

rejoin his wife and child among her people; and we understand that, at the time we are writing these pages, he resides at a trading-house established of late by the American Fur Company, in the Blackfoot country, where he acts as an interpreter and has his Indian girl with him.

CHAPTER XII.

A WINTER CAMP IN THE WILDERNESS. — MEDLEY OF TRAPPERS, HUNTERS, AND INDIANS.—SCARCITY OF GAME. — NEW ARRANGEMENTS IN THE CAMP. — DETACHMENTS SENT TO A DISTANCE. — CARELESSNESS OF THE INDIANS WHEN ENCAMPED.—SICKNESS AMONG THE INDIANS.—EXCELLENT CHARACTER OF THE NEZ PERCÉS. — THE CAPTAIN'S EFFORT AS A PACIFICATOR. — A NEZ PERCÉ'S ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF WAR. — ROBBERIES BY THE BLACKFEET.— LONG SUFFERING OF THE NEZ PERCES. — A HUNTER'S ELYSIUM AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.—MORE ROBBERIES.—THE CAPTAIN PREACHES UP A CRUSADE.—THE EFFECT UPON HIS HEARERS.

FOR the greater part of the month of November, Captain Bonneville remained in his temporary post on Salmon River. He was now in the full enjoyment of his wishes; leading a hunter's life in the heart of the wilderness, with all its wild populace around him. Beside his own people, motley in character and costume—creole, Kentuckian, Indian, half-breed, hired trapper, and free trapper—he was surrounded by encampments of Nez Percés and Flatheads, with their droves of horses covering the hills and plains. It was, he declares, a wild and bustling scene The hunting parties of white men and red men, continually sallying forth and returning; the groups at the various encampments, some cooking, some working, some amusing them-

selves at different games; the neighing of horses, the braying of asses, the resounding strokes of the axe, the sharp report of the rifle, the whoop, the halloo, and the frequent burst of laughter, all in the midst of a region suddenly roused from perfect silence and loneliness by this transient hunters' sojourn, realized, he says, the idea of a "populous solitude."

The kind and genial character of the captain had, evidently, its influence on the opposite races thus fortuitously congregated together. The most perfect harmony prevailed between them. The Indians, he says, were friendly in their dispositions, and honest to the most scrupulous degree, in their intercourse with the white men. It is true they were somewhat importunate in their curiosity, and apt to be continually in the way, examining everything with keen and prying eye, and watching every movement of the white men. All this, however, was borne with great good humor by the captain, and through his example by his men. Indeed, throughout all his transactions, he shows himself the friend of the poor Indians, and his conduct towards them is above all praise.

The Nez Percés, the Flatheads, and the Hanging-ears, pride themselves upon the number of their horses, of which they possess more in proportion than any other of the mountain tribes within the buffalo range. Many of the Indian warriors and hunters, encamped around Captain Bonneville, possess from thirty to forty horses each.

Their horses are stout, well built ponies, of great wind, and capable of enduring the severest hardship and fatigue. The swiftest of them, however, are those obtained from the whites, while sufficiently young to become acclimated and inured to the rough service of the mountains.

By degrees the populousness of this encampment began to produce its inconveniences. The immense droves of horses owned by the Indians consumed the herbage of the surrounding hills; while, to drive them to any distant pasturage, in a neighborhood abounding with lurking and deadly enemies, would be to endanger the loss both of man and beast. Game, too, began to grow scarce. It was soon hunted and frightened out of the vicinity, and though the Indians made a wide circuit through the mountains in the hope of driving the buffalo towards the cantonment, their expedition was unsuccessful. It was plain that so large a party could not subsist themselves there, nor in any one place, throughout the winter. Captain Bonneville, therefore, altered his whole arrangements. He detached fifty men towards the south to winter upon Snake River, and to trap about its waters in the spring, with orders to rejoin him in the month of July, at Horse Creek, in Green River Valley, which he had fixed upon as the general rendezvous of his company for the ensuing year.

Of all his late party, he now retained with him merely a small number of free trappers, with whom he intended to sojourn among the Nez Percés and Flatheads, and

adopt the Indian mode of moving with the game and grass. Those bands, in effect, shortly afterwards broke up their encampments and set off for a less beaten neighborhood. Captain Bonneville remained behind for a few days, that he might secretly prepare *caches*, in which to deposit everything not required for current use. Thus lightened of all superfluous incumbrance, he set off on the 20th of November to rejoin his Indian allies. He found them encamped in a secluded part of the country, at the head of a small stream. Considering themselves out of all danger, in this sequestered spot, from their old enemies, the Blackfeet, their encampment manifested the most negligent security. Their lodges were scattered in every direction, and their horses covered every hill for a great distance round, grazing upon the upland bunch grass, which grew in great abundance, and though dry, retained its nutritious properties instead of losing them, like other grasses, in the autumn.

When the Nez Percés, Flatheads, and Pends Oreilles are encamped in a dangerous neighborhood, says Captain Bonneville, the greatest care is taken of their horses, those prime articles of Indian wealth, and objects of Indian depredation. Each warrior has his horse tied by one foot at night to a stake planted before his lodge. Here they remain until broad daylight; by that time the young men of the camp are already ranging over the surrounding hills. Each family then drives its horses to some eligible spot, where they are left to graze unat-

tended. A young Indian repairs occasionally to the pasture to give them water, and to see that all is well. So accustomed are the horses to this management, that they keep together in the pasture where they have been left. As the sun sinks behind the hills, they may be seen moving from all points towards the camp, where they surrender themselves to be tied up for the night. Even in situations of danger, the Indians rarely set guards over their camp at night, intrusting that office entirely to their vigilant and well-trained dogs.

In an encampment, however, of such fancied security as that in which Captain Bonneville found his Indian friends, much of these precautions with respect to their horses are omitted. They merely drive them, at nightfall, to some sequestered little dell, and leave them there, at perfect liberty, until the morning.

One object of Captain Bonneville in wintering among these Indians, was to procure a supply of horses against the spring. They were, however, extremely unwilling to part with any, and it was with great difficulty that he purchased, at the rate of twenty dollars each, a few for the use of some of his free trappers, who were on foot, and dependent on him for their equipment.

In this encampment Captain Bonneville remained from the 21st of November to the 9th of December. During this period the thermometer ranged from thirteen to forty-two degrees. There were occasional falls of snow; but it generally melted away almost immediately, and

the tender blades of new grass began to shoot up among the old. On the 7th of December, however, the thermometer fell to seven degrees.

The reader will recollect that, on distributing his forces, when in Green River Valley, Captain Bonneville had detached a party, headed by a leader of the name of Matthieu, with all the weak and disabled horses, to sojourn about Bear River, meet the Shoshonie bands, and afterwards to rejoin him at his winter camp on Salmon River.

More than sufficient time had elapsed, yet Matthieu failed to make his appearance, and uneasiness began to be felt on his account. Captain Bonneville sent out four men, to range the country through which he would have to pass, and endeavor to get some information concerning him; for his route lay across the great Snake River plain, which spreads itself out like an Arabian desert, and on which a cavalcade could be descried at a great distance. The scouts soon returned, having proceeded no further than the edge of the plain, pretending that their horses were lame; but it was evident they had feared to venture, with so small a force, into these exposed and dangerous regions.

A disease, which Captain Bonneville supposed to be pneumonia, now appeared among the Indians, carrying off numbers of them, after an illness of three or four days.

The worthy captain acted as physician, prescribing

profuse sweatings and copious bleedings, and uniformly with success, if the patient was subsequently treated with proper care. In extraordinary cases, the poor savages called in the aid of their own doctors or conjurers, who officiated with great noise and mummery, but with little benefit. Those who died during this epidemic, were buried in graves, after the manner of the whites, but without any regard to the direction of the head. It is a fact worthy of notice, that, while this malady made such ravages among the natives, not a single white man had the slightest symptom of it.

A familiar intercourse of some standing with the Pierced-nose and Flathead Indians, had now convinced Captain Bonneville of their amicable and inoffensive character; he began to take a strong interest in them, and conceived the idea of becoming a pacificator, and healing the deadly feud between them and the Blackfeet, in which they were so deplorably the sufferers. He proposed the matter to some of the leaders, and urged that they should meet the Blackfeet chiefs in a grand pacific conference, offering to send two of his men to the enemy's camp with pipe, tobacco, and flag of truce, to negotiate the proposed meeting.

The Nez Percés and Flathead sages, upon this, held a council of war, of two days' duration, in which there was abundance of hard smoking and long talking, and both eloquence and tobacco were nearly exhausted. At length they came to a decision to reject the worthy captain's

proposition, and upon pretty substantial grounds, as the reader may judge.

"War," said the chiefs, "is a bloody business, and full of evil; but it keeps the eyes of the chiefs always open, and makes the limbs of the young men strong and supple. In war, every one is on the alert. If we see a trail, we know it must be an enemy; if the Blackfeet come to us, we know it is for war, and we are ready. Peace, on the other hand, sounds no alarm; the eyes of the chiefs are closed in sleep, and the young men are sleek and lazy. The horses stray into the mountains; the women and their little babes go about alone. But the heart of a Blackfoot is a lie, and his tongue is a trap. If he says peace, it is to deceive; he comes to us as a brother: he smokes his pipe with us; but when he sees us weak, and off our guard, he will slay and steal. We will have no such peace; let there be war!"

With this reasoning, Captain Bonneville was fain to acquiesce; but, since the sagacious Flatheads and their allies were content to remain in a state of warfare, he wished them, at least, to exercise the boasted vigilance which war was to produce, and to keep their eyes open. He represented to them the impossibility, that two such considerable clans could move about the country without leaving trails by which they might be traced. Besides, among the Blackfeet braves were several Nez Percés, who had been taken prisoners in early youth, adopted by their captors, and trained up and imbued with warlike

and predatory notions; these had lost all sympathies with their native tribe, and would be prone to lead the enemy to their secret haunts. He exhorted them, therefore, to keep upon the alert, and never to remit their vigilance, while within the range of so crafty and cruel a foe. All these counsels were lost upon his easy and simple-minded hearers. A careless indifference reigned throughout their encampments, and their horses were permitted to range the hills at night in perfect freedom. Captain Bonneville had his own horses brought in at night, and properly picketed and guarded. The evil he apprehended soon took place. In a single night, a sweep was made through the neighboring pastures by the Blackfeet, and eighty-six of the finest horses carried off. A whip and a rope were left in a conspicuous situation by the robbers, as a taunt to the simpletons they had unhorsed.

Long before sunrise, the news of this calamity spread like wildfire through the different encampments. Captain Bonneville, whose own horses remained safe at their pickets, watched in momentary expectation of an outbreak of warriors, Pierced-nose and Flathead, in furious pursuit of the marauders; but no such thing—they contented themselves with searching diligently over hill and dale, to glean up such horses as had escaped the hands of the marauders, and then resigned themselves to their loss with the most exemplary quiescence.

Some, it is true, who were entirely unhorsed, set out

on a begging visit to their cousins, as they call them, the Lower Nez Percés, who inhabit the lower country about the Columbia, and possess horses in abundance. To these they repair when in difficulty, and seldom fail, by dint of begging and bartering, to get themselves once more mounted on horseback.

Game had now become scarce in the neighborhood of the camp, and it was necessary, according to Indian custom, to move off to a less beaten ground. Captain Bonneville proposed the Horse Prairie; but his Indian friends objected, that many of the Nez Percés had gone to visit their cousins, and that the whites were few in number, so that their united force was not sufficient to venture on the buffalo grounds, which were infested by bands of Blackfeet.

They now spoke of a place at no great distance, which they represented as a perfect hunter's elysium. It was on the right branch, or head stream of the river, locked up among cliffs and precipices, where there was no danger from roving bands, and where the Blackfeet dare not enter. Here, they said, the elk abounded, and the mountain sheep were to be seen trooping upon the rocks and hills. A little distance beyond it, also, herds of buffalo were to be met with, out of the range of danger. Thither they proposed to move their camp.

The proposition pleased the captain, who was desirous, through the Indians, of becoming acquainted with all the secret places of the land. Accordingly, on the 9th of

December, they struck their tents, and moved forward by short stages, as many of the Indians were yet feeble from the late malady.

Following up the right fork of the river, they came to where it entered a deep gorge of the mountains, up which, lay the secluded region so much vaunted by the Indians. Captain Bonneville halted, and encamped for three days, before entering the gorge. In the meantime, he detached five of his free trappers to scour the hills and kill as many elk as possible, before the main body should enter, as they would then be soon frightened away by the various Indian hunting parties.

While thus encamped, they were still liable to the marauds of the Blackfeet, and Captain Bonneville admonished his Indian friends to be upon their guard. The Nez Percés, however, notwithstanding their recent loss, were still careless of their horses; merely driving them to some secluded spot, and leaving them there for the night, without setting any guard upon them. The consequence was a second swoop, in which forty-one were carried off. This was borne with equal philosophy with the first, and no effort was made either to recover the horses, or to take vengeance on the thieves.

The Nez Percés, however, grew more cautious with respect to their remaining horses, driving them regularly to the camp every evening, and fastening them to pickets. Captain Bonneville, however, told them that this was not enough. It was evident that they were dogged by a dar-

ing and persevering enemy, who was encouraged by past impunity; they should, therefore, take more than usual precautions, and post a guard at night over their cavalry. They could not, however, be persuaded to depart from their usual custom. The horse once picketed, the care of the owner was over for the night, and he slept profoundly. None waked in the camp but the gamblers, who, absorbed in their play, were more difficult to be roused to external circumstances than even the sleepers.

The Blackfeet are bold enemies, and fond of hazardous exploits. The band that were hovering about the neighborhood, finding they had such pacific people to deal with, redoubled their daring. The horses being now picketed before the lodges, a number of Blackfeet scouts penetrated in the early part of the night into the very centre of the camp. Here they went about among the lodges, as calmly and deliberately as if at home, quietly cutting loose the horses that stood picketed by the lodges of their sleeping owners. One of these prowlers, more adventurous than the rest, approached a fire, round which a group of Nez Percés were gambling with the most intense eagerness. Here he stood for some time, muffled up in his robe, peering over the shoulders of the players, watching the changes of their countenances and the fluctuations of the game. So completely engrossed were they, that the presence of this muffled eaves-dropper was unnoticed, and having executed his bravado, he retired undiscovered.

Having cut loose as many horses as they could conveniently carry off, the Blackfeet scouts rejoined their comrades, and all remained patiently round the camp. By degrees, the horses, finding themselves at liberty, took their route towards their customary grazing ground. As they emerged from the camp, they were silently taken possession of, until, having secured about thirty, the Blackfeet sprang on their backs and scampered off. The clatter of hoofs startled the gamblers from their game. They gave the alarm, which soon roused the sleepers from every lodge. Still all was quiescent; no marshalling of forces, no saddling of steed and dashing off in pursuit, no talk of retribution for their repeated outrages. The patience of Captain Bonneville was at length exhausted. He had played the part of a pacificator without success; he now altered his tone, and resolved, if possible, to rouse their war spirit.

Accordingly, convoking their chiefs, he inveighed against their craven policy, and urged the necessity of vigorous and retributive measures, that would check the confidence and presumption of their enemies, if not inspire them with awe. For this purpose, he advised that a war party should be immediately sent off on the trail of the marauders, to follow them, if necessary, into the very heart of the Blackfoot country, and not to leave them until they had taken signal vengeance. Beside this, he recommended the organization of minor war parties, to make reprisals to the extent of the losses sus-

tained. "Unless you rouse yourselves from your apathy," said he, "and strike some bold and decisive blow, you will cease to be considered men, or objects of manly warfare. The very squaws and children of the Blackfeet will be sent against you, while their warriors reserve themselves for nobler antagonists."

This harangue had evidently a momentary effect upon the pride of the hearers. After a short pause, however, one of the orators arose. It was bad, he said, to go to war for mere revenge. The Great Spirit had given them a heart for peace, not for war. They had lost horses, it was true, but they could easily get others from their cousins, the Lower Nez Percés, without incurring any risk; whereas, in war they should lose men, who were not so readily replaced. As to their late losses, an increased watchfulness would prevent any more misfortunes of the kind. He disapproved, therefore, of all hostile measures; and all the other chiefs concurred in his opinion.

Captain Bonneville again took up the point. "It is true," said he, "the Great Spirit has given you a heart to love your friends; but he has also given you an arm to strike your enemies. Unless you do something speedily to put an end to this continual plundering, I must say farewell. As yet, I have sustained no loss; thanks to the precautions which you have slighted: but my property is too unsafe here; my turn will come next; I and my people will share the contempt you are bring-

ing upon yourselves, and will be thought, like you, poor-spirited beings, who may at any time be plundered with impunity."

The conference broke up with some signs of excitement on the part of the Indians. Early the next morning, a party of thirty men set off in pursuit of the foe, and Captain Bonneville hoped to hear a good account of the Blackfeet marauders. To his disappointment, the war party came lagging back on the following day, leading a few old, sorry, broken-down horses, which the freebooters had not been able to urge to sufficient speed. The effort exhausted the martial spirit, and satisfied the wounded pride of the Nez Percés, and they relapsed into their usual state of passive indifference.

CHAPTER XIII.

STORY OF KOSATO, THE RENEGADE BLACKFOOT.

F the meekness and long-suffering of the Pierced-noses grieved the spirit of Captain Bonneville, there was another individual in the camp, to whom they were still more annoying. This was a Blackfoot renegado, named Kosato, a fiery, hot-blooded youth, who, with a beautiful girl of the same tribe, had taken refuge among the Nez Percés. Though adopted into the tribe, he still retained the warlike spirit of his race, and loathed the peaceful, inoffensive habits of those around him. The hunting of the deer, the elk, and the buffalo, which was the height of their ambition, was too tame to satisfy his wild and restless nature. His heart burned for the foray, the ambush, the skirmish, the scamper, and all the haps and hazards of roving and predatory warfare.

The recent hoverings of the Blackfeet about the camp, and their nightly prowls, and daring and successful marauds, had kept him in a fever and a flutter; like a hawk in a cage, who hears his late companions swooping and screaming in wild liberty above him. The attempt of

Captain Bonneville to rouse the war spirit of the Nez Percés, and prompt them to retaliation, was ardently seconded by Kosato. For several days he was incessantly devising schemes of vengeance, and endeavoring to set on foot an expedition that should carry dismay and desolation into the Blackfeet towns. All his art was exerted to touch upon those springs of human action with which he was most familiar. He drew the listening savages round him by his nervous eloquence; taunted them with recitals of past wrongs and insults; drew glowing pictures of triumphs and trophies within their reach; recounted tales of daring and romantic enterprise, of secret marchings, covert lurkings, midnight surprisals, sackings, burnings, plunderings, scalpings; together with the triumphant return, and the feasting and rejoicing of the victors. These wild tales were intermingled with the beating of the drum, the yell, the war-whoop and the war-dance, so inspiring to Indian valor. All, however, were lost upon the peaceful spirits of his hearers; not a Nez Percés was to be roused to vengeance, or stimulated to glorious war. In the bitterness of his heart, the Blackfoot renegado repined at the mishap which had severed him from a race of congenial spirits, and driven him to take refuge among beings so destitute of martial fire.

The character and conduct of this man attracted the attention of Captain Bonneville, and he was anxious to hear the reason why he had deserted his tribe, and why he looked back upon them with such deadly hostility.

Kosato told him his own story briefly;—it gives a picture of the deep, strong passions that work in the bosoms of these miscalled stoics.

"You see my wife," said he: "she is good; she is beautiful—I love her. Yet, she has been the cause of all my troubles. She was the wife of my chief. I loved her more than he did; and she knew it. We talked together; we laughed together; we were always seeking each other's society; but we were as innocent as children. The chief grew jealous, and commanded her to speak with me no more. His heart became hard towards her; his jealousy grew more furious. He beat her without cause and without mercy; and threatened to kill her outright, if she even looked at me. Do you want traces of his fury? Look at that scar! His rage against me was no less persecuting. War parties of the Crows were hovering round us; our young men had seen their trail. All hearts were roused for action; my horses were before my lodge. Suddenly the chief came, took them to his own pickets, and called them his own. What could I do?—he was a chief. I durst not speak, but my heart was burning. I joined no longer in the council, the hunt, or the war-feast. What had I to do there? an unhorsed, degraded warrior. I kept by myself, and thought of nothing but these wrongs and outrages.

"I was sitting one evening upon a knoll that overlooked the meadow where the horses were pastured. I saw the horses that were once mine grazing among those

of the chief. This maddened me, and I sat brooding for a time over the injuries I had suffered, and the cruelties which she I loved had endured for my sake, until my heart swelled and grew sore, and my teeth were clinched. As I looked down upon the meadow, I saw the chief walking among his horses. I fastened my eyes on him as a hawk's; my blood boiled; I drew my breath hard. He went among the willows. In an instant I was on my feet; my hand was on my knife—I flew rather than ran—before he was aware, I sprang upon him, and with two blows laid him dead at my feet. I covered his body with earth, and strewed bushes over the place; then hastened to her I loved, told her what I had done, and urged her to fly with me. She only answered me with tears. I reminded her of the wrongs I had suffered, and of the blows and stripes she had endured from the deceased; I had done nothing but an act of justice. I again urged her to fly; but she only wept the more, and bade me go. My heart was heavy, but my eyes were dry. I folded my arms. ''Tis well,' said I, 'Kosato will go alone to the desert. None will be with him but the wild beasts of the desert. The seekers of blood may follow on his trail. They may come upon him when he sleeps, and glut their revenge; but you will be safe. Kosato will go alone.'

"I turned away. She sprang after me, and strained me in her arms. 'No,' cried she, 'Kosato shall not go alone! Wherever he goes I will go—he shall never part from me.'

"We hastily took in our hands such things as we most needed, and stealing quietly from the village, mounted the first horses we encountered. Speeding day and night, we soon reached this tribe. They received us with welcome, and we have dwelt with them in peace. They are good and kind; they are honest; but their hearts are the hearts of women."

Such was the story of Kosato, as related by him to Captain Bonneville. It is of a kind that often occurs in Indian life; where love elopements from tribe to tribe are as frequent as among the novel-read heroes and heroines of sentimental civilization, and often give rise to bloody and lasting feuds.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PARTY ENTERS THE MOUNTAIN GORGE.—A WILD FASTNESS AMONG THE HILLS.—MOUNTAIN MUTTON.—PEACE AND PLENTY.—THE AMOROUS TRAPPER.—A PIEBALD WEDDING.—A FREE TRAPPER'S WIFE—HER GALA EQUIPMENTS.—CHRISTMAS IN THE WILDERNESS.

ON the 19th of December Captain Bonneville and his confederate Indians raised their camp, and entered the narrow gorge made by the north fork of Salmon River. Up this lay the secure and plenteous hunting region so temptingly described by the Indians.

Since leaving Green River the plains had invariably been of loose sand or coarse gravel, and the rocky formation of the mountains of primitive limestone. The rivers, in general, were skirted with willows and bitter cotton-wood trees, and the prairies covered with wormwood. In the hollow breast of the mountains which they were now penetrating, the surrounding heights were clothed with pine; while the declivities of the lower hills afforded abundance of bunch grass for the horses.

As the Indians had represented, they were now in a natural fastness of the mountains, the ingress and egress of which was by a deep gorge, so narrow, rugged, and

difficult, as to prevent secret approach or rapid retreat, and to admit of easy defense. The Blackfeet, therefore, refrained from venturing in after the Nez Percés, awaiting a better chance, when they should once more emerge into the open country.

Captain Bonneville soon found that the Indians had not exaggerated the advantages of this region. Besides numerous gangs of elk, large flocks of the ahsahta or bighorn, the mountain sheep, were to be seen bounding among the precipices. These simple animals were easily circumvented and destroyed. A few hunters may surround a flock and kill as many as they please. Numbers were daily brought into camp, and the flesh of those which were young and fat, was extolled as superior to the finest mutton.

Here, then, there was a cessation from toil, from hunger, and alarm. Past ills and dangers were forgotten. The hunt, the game, the song, the story, the rough though good-humored joke, made time pass joyously away, and plenty and security reigned throughout the camp.

Idleness and ease, it is said, lead to love, and love to matrimony, in civilized life, and the same process takes place in the wilderness. Filled with good cheer and mountain mutton, one of the free trappers began to repine at the solitude of his lodge, and to experience the force of that great law of nature, "It is not meet for man to live alone."

After a night of grave cogitation, he repaired to Kowsoter, the Pierced-nose chief; and unfolded to him the secret workings of his bosom.

"I want," said he, "a wife. Give me one from among your tribe. Not a young, giddy-pated girl, that will think of nothing but flaunting and finery, but a sober, discreet, hard-working squaw; one that will share my lot without flinching, however hard it may be; that can take care of my lodge and be a companion and a helpmate to me in the wilderness." Kowsoter promised to look round among the females of his tribe, and procure such a one as he desired. Two days were requisite for the search. At the expiration of these, Kowsoter called at his lodge and informed him that he would bring his bride to him in the course of the afternoon. He kept his word. At the appointed time he approached, leading the bride, a comely copper-colored dame, attired in her Indian finery. Her father, mother, brothers by the half dozen, and cousins by the score, all followed on to grace the ceremony, and greet the new and important relative.

The trapper received his new and numerous family connection with proper solemnity; he placed his bride beside him, and, filling the pipe, the great symbol of peace, with his best tobacco, took two or three whiffs, then handed it to the chief, who transferred it to the father of the bride, from whom it was passed on from hand to hand and mouth to mouth of the whole circle

of kinsmen round the fire, all maintaining the most profound and becoming silence.

After several pipes had been filled and emptied in this solemn ceremonial, the chief addressed the bride; detailing, at considerable length, the duties of a wife; which, among Indians, are little less onerous than those of the pack-horse; this done, he turned to her friends, and congratulated them upon the great alliance she had made. They showed a due sense of their good fortune, especially when the nuptial presents came to be distributed among the chiefs and relatives, amounting to about one hundred and eighty dollars. The company soon retired, and now the worthy trapper found, indeed, that he had no green girl to deal with; for the knowing dame at once assumed the style and dignity of a trapper's wife, taking possession of the lodge as her undisputed empire; arranging everything according to her own taste and habitudes; and appearing as much at home, and on as easy terms with the trapper, as if they had been man and wife for years.

We have already given a picture of a free trapper and his horse, as furnished by Captain Bonneville: we shall here subjoin, as a companion picture, his description of a free trapper's wife, that the reader may have a correct idea of the kind of blessing the worthy hunter in question had invoked to solace him in the wilderness.

"The free trapper, while a bachelor, has no greater pet than his horse; but the moment he takes a wife (a

sort of brevet rank in matrimony occasionally bestowed upon some Indian fair one, like the heroes of ancient chivalry, in the open field), he discovers that he has a still more fanciful and capricious animal on which to lavish his expenses.

"No sooner does an Indian belle experience this promotion, than all her notions at once rise and expand to the dignity of her situation; and the purse of her lover, and his credit into the bargain, are tasked to the utmost to fit her out in becoming style. The wife of a free trapper to be equipped and arrayed like any ordinary and undistinguished squaw? Perish the groveling thought! In the first place, she must have a horse for her own riding; but no jaded, sorry, earth-spirited hack; such as is sometimes assigned by an Indian husband for the transportation of his squaw and her pappooses: the wife of a free trapper must have the most beautiful animal she can lay her eyes on. And then, as to his decoration: headstall, breast-bands, saddle and crupper are lavishly embroidered with beads, and hung with thimbles, hawks' bells, and bunches of ribands. From each side of the saddle hangs an *esquimoot*, a sort of pocket, in which she bestows the residue of her trinkets and knick-knacks, which cannot be crowded on the decoration of her horse or herself. Over this she folds, with great care, a drapery of scarlet and bright-colored calicoes, and now considers the caparison of her steed complete.

"As to her own person, she is even still more extrava-

gant. Her hair, esteemed beautiful in proportion to its length, is carefully plaited, and made to fall with seeming negligence over either breast. Her riding hat is stuck full of party-colored feathers; her robe, fashioned somewhat after that of the whites, is of red, green, and sometimes gray cloth, but always of the finest texture that can be procured. Her leggins and moccasins are of the most beautiful and expensive workmanship, and fitted neatly to the foot and ankle, which with the Indian women are generally well formed and delicate. Then as to jewelry: in the way of finger-rings, ear-rings, necklaces, and other female glories, nothing within reach of the trapper's means is omitted, that can tend to impress the beholder with an idea of the lady's high estate. To finish the whole, she selects from among her blankets of various dyes, one of some glowing color, and throwing it over her shoulders with a native grace, vaults into the saddle of her gay, prancing steed, and is ready to follow her mountaineer 'to the last gasp with love and loyalty.'"

Such is the general picture of the free trapper's wife, given by Captain Bonneville; how far it applied in its details to the one in question, does not altogether appear, though it would seem from the outset of her connubial career, that she was ready to avail herself of all the pomp and circumstance of her new condition. It is worthy of mention, that wherever there are several wives of free trappers in a camp, the keenest rivalry exists

between them, to the sore detriment of their husbands' purses. Their whole time is expended, and their ingenuity tasked by endeavors to eclipse each other in dress and decoration. The jealousies and heart-burnings thus occasioned among these, so styled, children of nature, are equally intense with those of the rival leaders of style and fashion in the luxurious abodes of civilized life.

The genial festival of Christmas, which throughout all Christendom lights up the fireside of home with mirth and jollity, followed hard upon the wedding just described. Though far from kindred and friends, Captain Bonneville and his handful of free trappers were not disposed to suffer the festival to pass unenjoyed; they were in a region of good cheer, and were disposed to be joyous; so it was determined to "light up the yule clog," and celebrate a merry Christmas in the heart of the wilderness.

On Christmas eve, accordingly, they began their rude fêtes and rejoicings. In the course of the night the free trappers surrounded the lodge of the Pierce-nosed chief, and in lieu of Christmas carols, saluted him with a *feu de joie.*

Kowsoter received it in a truly Christian spirit, and after a speech, in which he expressed his high gratification at the honor done him, invited the whole company to a feast on the following day. His invitation was gladly accepted. A Christmas dinner in the wigwam of

an Indian chief! There was novelty in the idea. Not one failed to be present. The banquet was served up in primitive style: skins of various kinds, nicely dressed for the occasion, were spread upon the ground; upon these were heaped up abundance of venison, elk meat, and mountain mutton; with various bitter roots, which the Indians use as condiments.

After a short prayer, the company all seated themselves cross-legged, in Turkish fashion, to the banquet, which passed off with great hilarity. After which various games of strength and agility by both white men and Indians, closed the Christmas festivities.

CHAPTER XV.

A HUNT AFTER HUNTERS.—HUNGRY TIMES.—A VORACIOUS REPAST.—WINTRY WEATHER.—GODIN'S RIVER.—SPLENDID WINTER SCENE ON THE GREAT LAVA PLAIN OF SNAKE RIVER.—SEVERE TRAVELLING AND TRAMPING IN THE SNOW.—MANEUVERS OF A SOLITARY INDIAN HORSEMAN.—ENCAMPMENT ON SNAKE RIVER.—BANNECK INDIANS.—THE HORSE CHIEF—HIS CHARMED LIFE.

THE continued absence of Matthieu and his party had, by this time, caused great uneasiness in the mind of Captain Bonneville; and, finding there was no dependence to be placed upon the perseverance and courage of scouting parties, in so perilous a quest, he determined to set out himself on the search, and to keep on until he should ascertain something of the object of his solicitude.

Accordingly, on the 26th December, he left the camp, accompanied by thirteen stark trappers and hunters, all well mounted and armed for dangerous enterprise. On the following morning they passed out at the head of the mountain gorge, and sallied forth into the open plain. As they confidently expected a brush with the Blackfeet, or some other predatory horde, they moved with great circumspection, and kept vigilant watch in their encampments.

In the course of another day they left the main branch of Salmon River, and proceeded south towards a pass called John Day's Defile. It was severe and arduous travelling. The plains were swept by keen and bitter blasts of wintry wind; the ground was generally covered with snow, game was scarce, so that hunger generally prevailed in the camp, while the want of pasturage soon began to manifest itself in the declining vigor of the horses.

The party had scarcely encamped on the afternoon of the 28th, when two of the hunters who had sallied forth in quest of game came galloping back in great alarm. While hunting they had perceived a party of savages, evidently maneuvering to cut them off from the camp; and nothing had saved them from being entrapped but the speed of their horses.

These tidings struck dismay into the camp. Captain Bonneville endeavored to reassure his men by representing the position of their encampment, and its capability of defense. He then ordered the horses to be driven in and picketed, and threw up a rough breastwork of fallen trunks of trees, and the vegetable rubbish of the wilderness. Within this barrier was maintained a vigilant watch throughout the night, which passed away without alarm. At early dawn they scrutinized the surrounding plain, to discover whether any enemies had been lurking about during the night: not a foot-print, however, was to be discovered in the coarse gravel with which the plain was covered.

Hunger now began to cause more uneasiness than the apprehensions of surrounding enemies. After marching a few miles they encamped at the foot of a mountain, in hopes of finding buffalo. It was not until the next day that they discovered a pair of fine bulls on the edge of the plain, among rocks and ravines. Having now been two days and a half without a mouthful of food, they took especial care that these animals should not escape them. While some of the surest marksmen advanced cautiously with their rifles into the rough ground, four of the best mounted horsemen took their stations in the plain, to run the bulls down should they only be maimed.

The buffalo were wounded, and set off in headlong flight. The half-famished horses were too weak to overtake them on the frozen ground, but succeeded in driving them on the ice, where they slipped and fell, and were easily dispatched. The hunters loaded themselves with beef for present and future supply, and then returned and encamped at the last night's fire. Here they passed the remainder of the day, cooking and eating with a voracity proportioned to previous starvation; forgetting in the hearty revel of the moment, the certain dangers with which they were environed.

The cravings of hunger being satisfied, they now began to debate about their further progress. The men were much disheartened by the hardships they had already endured. Indeed, two who had been in the rear guard,

taking advantage of their position, had deserted and returned to the lodges of the Nez Percés. The prospect ahead was enough to stagger the stoutest heart. They were in the dead of winter. As far as the eye could reach the wild landscape was wrapped in snow; which was evidently deepening as they advanced. Over this they would have to toil with the icy wind blowing in their faces: their horses might give out through want of pasturage; and they themselves must expect intervals of horrible famine like that they had already experienced.

With Captain Bonneville, however, perseverance was a matter of pride; and having undertaken this enterprise, nothing could turn him back until it was accomplished: though he declares that, had he anticipated the difficulties and sufferings which attended it, he should have flinched from the undertaking.

Onward, therefore, the little band urged their way, keeping along the course of a stream called John Day's Creek. The cold was so intense that they had frequently to dismount and travel on foot, lest they should freeze in their saddles. The days, which, at this season, are short enough even in the open prairies, were narrowed to a few hours by the high mountains, which allowed the travellers but a brief enjoyment of the cheering rays of the sun. The snow was, generally, at least twenty inches in depth, and in many places much more: those who dismounted had to beat their way with toilsome steps. Eight miles were considered a good day's journey. The

horses were almost famished; for the herbage was covered by the deep snow, so that they had nothing to subsist upon but scanty wisps of the dry bunch grass which peered above the surface, and the small branches and twigs of frozen willows and wormwood.

In this way they urged their slow and painful course to the south down John Day's Creek, until it lost itself in a swamp. Here they encamped upon the ice among stiffened willows, where they were obliged to beat down and clear away the snow to procure pasturage for their horses.

Hence, they toiled on to Godin River; so called after an Iroquois hunter in the service of Sublette, who was murdered there by the Blackfeet. Many of the features of this remote wilderness are thus named after scenes of violence and bloodshed that occurred to the early pioneers. It was an act of filial vengeance on the part of Godin's son, Antoine, that, as the reader may recollect, brought on the recent battle at Pierre's Hole.

From Godin's River, Captain Bonneville and his followers came out upon the plain of the Three Butes; so called from three singular and isolated hills that rise from the midst. It is a part of the great desert of Snake River, one of the most remarkable tracts beyond the mountains. Could they have experienced a respite from their sufferings and anxieties, the immense landscape spread out before them was calculated to inspire admiration. Winter has its beauties and glories, as well as

summer; and Captain Bonneville had the soul to appreciate them.

Far away, says he, over the vast plains, and up the steep sides of the lofty mountains, the snow lay spread in dazzling whiteness: and whenever the sun emerged in the morning above the giant peaks, or burst forth from among clouds in his mid-day course, mountain and dell, glazed rock and frosted tree, glowed and sparkled with surpassing lustre. The tall pines seemed sprinkled with a silver dust, and the willows, studded with minute icicles reflecting the prismatic rays, brought to mind the fairy trees conjured up by the caliph's story-teller, to adorn his vale of diamonds.

The poor wanderers, however, nearly starved with hunger and cold, were in no mood to enjoy the glories of these brilliant scenes; though they stamped pictures on their memory which have been recalled with delight in more genial situations.

Encamping at the west Bute, they found a place swept by the winds, so that it was bare of snow, and there was abundance of bunch grass. Here the horses were turned loose to graze throughout the night. Though for once they had ample pasturage, yet the keen winds were so intense, that, in the morning, a mule was found frozen to death. The trappers gathered round and mourned over him as over a cherished friend. They feared their half-famished horses would soon share his fate, for there seemed scarce blood enough left in their veins to with-

stand the freezing cold. To beat the way further through the snow with these enfeebled animals, seemed next to impossible; and despondency began to creep over their hearts, when, fortunately, they discovered a trail made by some hunting party. Into this they immediately entered, and proceeded with less difficulty. Shortly afterward, a fine buffalo bull came bounding across the snow, and was instantly brought down by the hunters. A fire was soon blazing and crackling, and an ample repast soon cooked, and sooner dispatched, after which they made some further progress and then encamped. One of the men reached the camp nearly frozen to death; but good cheer and a blazing fire gradually restored life, and put his blood in circulation.

Having now a beaten path, they proceeded the next morning with more facility; indeed, the snow decreased in depth as they receded from the mountains, and the temperature became more mild. In the course of the day, they discovered a solitary horseman hovering at a distance before them on the plain. They spurred on to overtake him; but he was better mounted on a fresher steed, and kept at a wary distance, reconnoitring them with evident distrust; for the wild dress of the free trappers, their leggins, blankets, and cloth caps garnished with fur and topped off with feathers, even their very elf-locks and weather-bronzed complexions, gave them the look of Indians rather than white men, and made him mistake them for a war party of some hostile tribe.

After much maneuvering, the wild horseman was at length brought to a parley; but even then he conducted himself with the caution of a knowing prowler of the prairies. Dismounting from his horse, and using him as a breastwork, he levelled his gun across his back, and, thus prepared for defense like a wary cruiser upon the high seas, he permitted himself to be approached within speaking distance.

He proved to be an Indian of the Banneck tribe, belonging to a band at no great distance. It was some time before he could be persuaded that he was conversing with a party of white men, and induced to lay aside his reserve and join them. He then gave them the interesting intelligence, that there were two companies of white men encamped in the neighborhood. This was cheering news to Captain Bonneville; who hoped to find in one of them the long-sought party of Matthieu. Pushing forward, therefore, with renovated spirits, he reached Snake River by nightfall, and there fixed his encampment.

Early the next morning (13th January, 1833), diligent search was made about the neighborhood for traces of the reported parties of white men. An encampment was soon discovered, about four miles further up the river; in which Captain Bonneville, to his great joy, found two of Matthieu's men, from whom he learnt that the rest of his party would be there in the course of a few days. It was a matter of great pride and self-gratulation to Cap-

tain Bonneville, that he had thus accomplished his dreary and doubtful enterprise; and he determined to pass some time in this encampment, both to wait the return of Matthieu, and to give needful repose to men and horses.

It was, in fact, one of the most eligible and delightful wintering grounds in that whole range of country. The Snake River here wound its devious way between low banks through the great plain of the Three Butes; and was bordered by wide and fertile meadows. It was studded with islands, which, like the alluvial bottoms, were covered with groves of cotton-wood, thickets of willow, tracts of good lowland grass, and abundance of green rushes. The adjacent plains were so vast in extent, that no single band of Indians could drive the buffalo out of them; nor was the snow of sufficient depth to give any serious inconvenience. Indeed, during the sojourn of Captain Bonneville in this neighborhood, which was in the heart of winter, he found the weather, with the exception of a few cold and stormy days, generally mild and pleasant; freezing a little at night, but invariably thawing with the morning's sun—resembling the spring weather in the middle parts of the United States.

The lofty range of the Three Tetons, those great landmarks of the Rocky Mountains, rising in the east, and circling away to the north and west of the great plain of Snake River; and the mountains of Salt River and Portneuf towards the south, catch the earliest falls of snow.

Their white robes lengthen as the winter advances, and spread themselves far into the plain, driving the buffalo in herds to the banks of the river in quest of food; where they are easily slain in great numbers.

Such were the palpable advantages of this winter encampment; added to which, it was secure from the prowlings and plunderings of any petty band of roving Blackfeet; the difficulties of retreat rendering it unwise for those crafty depredators to venture an attack, unless with an overpowering force.

About ten miles below the encampment lay the Banneck Indians; numbering about one hundred and twenty lodges. They are brave and cunning warriors, and deadly foes of the Blackfeet, whom they easily overcome in battles where their forces are equal. They are not vengeful and enterprising in warfare, however; seldom sending war parties to attack the Blackfeet towns, but contenting themselves with defending their own territories and house. About one third of their warriors are armed with fusees; the rest with bows and arrows.

As soon as the spring opens, they move down the right bank of Snake River, and encamp at the heads of the Boisée and Payette. Here their horses wax fat on good pasturage, while the tribe revels in plenty upon the flesh of deer, elk, bear, and beaver. They then descend a little further, and are met by the Lower Nez Percés, with whom they trade for horses; giving in exchange beaver, buffalo, and buffalo robes. Hence they strike

upon the tributary streams on the left bank of Snake River, and encamp at the rise of the Portneuf and Blackfoot streams, in the buffalo range. Their horses, although of the Nez Percé breed, are inferior to the parent stock, from being ridden at too early an age; being often bought when but two years old, and immediately put to hard work. They have fewer horses, also, than most of these migratory tribes.

At the time that Captain Bonneville came into the neighborhood of these Indians, they were all in mourning for their chief, surnamed The Horse. This chief was said to possess a charmed life, or rather, to be invulnerable to lead; no bullet having ever hit him, though he had been in repeated battles, and often shot at by the surest marksmen. He had shown great magnanimity in his intercourse with the white men. One of the great men of his family had been slain in an attack upon a band of trappers passing through the territories of his tribe. Vengeance had been sworn by the Bannecks; but The Horse interfered, declaring himself the friend of white men, and, having great influence and authority among his people, he compelled them to forego all vindictive plans, and to conduct themselves amicably whenever they came in contact with the traders.

This chief had bravely fallen in resisting an attack made by the Blackfeet upon his tribe, while encamped at the head of Godin River. His fall in nowise lessened the faith of his people in his charmed life; for they de-

clared that it was not a bullet which laid him low, but a bit of horn which had been shot into him by some Blackfoot marksman; aware, no doubt, of the inefficiency of lead. Since his death, there was no one with sufficient influence over the tribe to restrain the wild and predatory propensities of the young men. The consequence was, they had become troublesome and dangerous neighbors; openly friendly, for the sake of traffic, but disposed to commit secret depredations, and to molest any small party that might fall within their reach.

CHAPTER XVI.

MISADVENTURES OF MATTHIEU AND HIS PARTY.—RETURN TO THE CACHES AT SALMON RIVER.—BATTLE BETWEEN NEZ PERCÉS AND BLACKFEET.—HEROISM OF A NEZ PERCÉ WOMAN—ENROLLED AMONG THE BRAVES.

N the 3d of February, Matthieu, with the residue of his band, arrived in camp. He had a disastrous story to relate. After parting with Captain Bonneville in Green River Valley, he had proceeded to the westward, keeping to the north of the Eutaw Mountains, a spur of the great Rocky chain. Here he experienced the most rugged travelling for his horses, and soon discovered that there was but little chance of meeting the Shoshonie bands. He now proceeded along Bear River, a stream much frequented by trappers; intending to shape his course to Salmon River, to rejoin Captain Bonneville.

He was misled, however, either through the ignorance or treachery of an Indian guide, and conducted into a wild valley, where he lay encamped during the autumn and the early part of the winter, nearly buried in snow, and almost starved. Early in the season he detached five men, with nine horses, to proceed to the neighbor-

hood of the Sheep Rock, on Bear River, where game was plenty, and there to procure a supply for the camp. They had not proceeded far on their expedition, when their trail was discovered by a party of nine or ten Indians, who immediately commenced a lurking pursuit, dogging them secretly for five or six days. So long as their encampments were well chosen, and a proper watch maintained, the wary savages kept aloof; at length, observing that they were badly encamped, in a situation where they might be approached with secrecy, the enemy crept stealthily along under cover of the river bank, preparing to burst suddenly upon their prey.

They had not advanced within striking distance, however, before they were discovered by one of the trappers. He immediately, but silently, gave the alarm to his companions. They all sprang upon their horses, and prepared to retreat to a safe position. One of the party, however, named Jennings, doubted the correctness of the alarm, and, before he mounted his horse, wanted to ascertain the fact. His companions urged him to mount, but in vain; he was incredulous and obstinate. A volley of fire-arms by the savages dispelled his doubts; but so overpowered his nerves, that he was unable to get into his saddle. His comrades, seeing his peril and confusion, generously leapt from their horses to protect him. A shot from a rifle brought him to the earth; in his agony he called upon the others not to desert him. Two of them, Le Roy and Ross, after fighting desperately,

were captured by the savages; the remaining two vaulted into their saddles, and saved themselves by headlong flight, being pursued for nearly thirty miles. They got safe back to Matthieu's camp, where their story inspired such dread of lurking Indians, that the hunters could not be prevailed upon to undertake another foray in quest of provisions. They remained, therefore, almost starving in their camp; now and then killing an old or disabled horse for food, while the elk and the mountain sheep roamed unmolested among the surrounding mountains.

The disastrous surprisal of this hunting party is cited by Captain Bonneville to show the importance of vigilant watching and judicious encampments in the Indian country. Most of these kind of disasters to traders and trappers arise from some careless inattention to the state of their arms and ammunition, the placing of their horses at night, the position of their camping ground, and the posting of their night watches. The Indian is a vigilant and crafty foe; by no means given to harebrained assaults; he seldom attacks when he finds his foe well prepared and on the alert. Caution is at least as efficacious a protection against him as courage.

The Indians who made this attack were at first supposed to be Blackfeet; until Captain Bonneville found, subsequently, in the camp of the Bannecks, a horse, saddle, and bridle, which he recognized as having belonged to one of the hunters. The Bannecks, however, stoutly denied having taken these spoils in fight, and

persisted in affirming that the outrage had been perpetrated by a Blackfoot band.

Captain Bonneville remained on Snake River nearly three weeks after the arrival of Matthieu and his party. At length his horses having recovered strength sufficient for a journey, he prepared to return to the Nez Percés, or rather to visit his *caches* on Salmon River; that he might take thence goods and equipments for the opening season. Accordingly, leaving sixteen men at Snake River, he set out, on the 19th of February, with sixteen others, on his journey to the caches.

Fording the river, he proceeded to the borders of the deep snow, when he encamped under the lee of immense piles of burnt rock. On the 21st he was again floundering through the snow, on the great Snake River plain, where it lay to the depth of thirty inches. It was sufficiently incrusted to bear a pedestrian; but the poor horses broke through the crust, and plunged and strained at every step. So lacerated were they by the ice, that it was necessary to change the front every hundred yards, and put a different one in the advance, to break the way. The open prairies were swept by a piercing and biting wind from the northwest. At night, they had to task their ingenuity to provide shelter and keep from freezing. In the first place, they dug deep holes in the snow, piling it up in ramparts to windward, as a protection against the blast. Beneath these, they spread buffalo skins; upon which they stretched themselves in full

dress, with caps, cloaks, and moccasins, and covered themselves with numerous blankets; notwithstanding all which, they were often severely pinched with the cold.

On the 28th of February, they arrived on the banks of Godin River. This stream emerges from the mountains opposite an eastern branch of the Malade River, running southeast, forms a deep and swift current about twenty yards wide, passing rapidly through a defile to which it gives its name, and then enters the great plain, where, after meandering about forty miles, it is finally lost in the region of the Burnt Rocks.

On the banks of this river, Captain Bonneville was so fortunate as to come upon a buffalo trail. Following it up, he entered the defile, where he remained encamped for two days, to allow the hunters time to kill and dry a supply of buffalo beef. In this sheltered defile, the weather was moderate, and grass was already sprouting more than an inch in height. There was abundance, too, of the salt weed; which grows most plentiful in clayey and gravelly barrens. It resembles pennyroyal, and derives its name from a partial saltness. It is a nourishing food for the horses in the winter, but they reject it the moment the young grass affords sufficient pasturage.

On the 6th of March, having cured sufficient meat, the party resumed their march, and moved on with comparative ease, excepting where they had to make their way through snow-drifts which had been piled up by the wind.

On the 11th, a small cloud of smoke was observed rising in a deep part of the defile. An encampment was instantly formed, and scouts were sent out to reconnoitre. They returned with intelligence that it was a hunting party of Flatheads, returning from the buffalo range laden with meat. Captain Bonneville joined them the next day, and persuaded them to proceed with his party a few miles below, to the caches, whither he proposed also to invite the Nez Percés, whom he hoped to find somewhere in this neighborhood. In fact, on the 13th, he was rejoined by that friendly tribe, who, since he separated from them on Salmon River, had likewise been out to hunt the buffalo, but had continued to be haunted and harassed by their old enemies the Blackfeet, who, as usual, had contrived to carry off many of their horses.

In the course of this hunting expedition, a small band of ten lodges separated from the main body, in search of better pasturage for their horses. About the 1st of March, the scattered parties of Blackfoot banditti united to the number of three hundred fighting men, and determined upon some signal blow. Proceeding to the former camping ground of the Nez Percés, they found the lodges deserted; upon which, they hid themselves among the willows and thickets, watching for some straggler, who might guide them to the present "whereabout" of their intended victims. As fortune would have it, Kosato, the Blackfoot renegade, was the first to pass along, accompanied by his blood-bought bride. He was on his way

from the main body of hunters to the little band of ten lodges. The Blackfeet knew and marked him as he passed; he was within bow-shot of their ambuscade; yet, much as they thirsted for his blood, they forbore to launch a shaft; sparing him for the moment, that he might lead them to their prey. Secretly following his trail, they discovered the lodges of the unfortunate Nez Percés, and assailed them with shouts and yellings. The Nez Percés numbered only twenty men, and but nine were armed with fusees. They showed themselves, however, as brave and skillful in war as they had been mild and long-suffering in peace. Their first care was to dig holes inside of their lodges; thus ensconced, they fought desperately, laying several of the enemy dead upon the ground; while they, though some of them were wounded, lost not a single warrior.

During the heat of the battle, a woman of the Nez Percés, seeing her warrior badly wounded and unable to fight, seized his bow and arrows, and bravely and successfully defended his person, contributing to the safety of the whole party.

In another part of the field of action, a Nez Percé had crouched behind the trunk of a fallen tree, and kept up a galling fire from his covert. A Blackfoot seeing this, procured a round log, and placing it before him as he lay prostrate, rolled it forward towards the trunk of the tree behind which his enemy lay crouched. It was a moment of breathless interest: whoever first showed

himself would be in danger of a shot. The Nez Percés put an end to the suspense. The moment the logs touched, he sprang upon his feet, and discharged the contents of his fusee into the back of his antagonist. By this time, the Blackfeet had got possession of the horses; several of their warriors lay dead on the field, and the Nez Percés, ensconced in their lodges, seemed resolved to defend themselves to the last gasp. It so happened that the chief of the Blackfeet party was a renegade from the Nez Percés: unlike Kosato, however, he had no vindictive rage against his native tribe, but was rather disposed, now he had got the booty, to spare all unnecessary effusion of blood. He held a long parley, therefore, with the besieged, and finally drew off his warriors, taking with him seventy horses. It appeared, afterwards, that the bullets of the Blackfeet had been entirely expended in the course of the battle, so that they were obliged to make use of stones as substitutes.

At the outset of the fight, Kosato, the renegade, fought with fury rather than valor: animating the others by word as well as deed. A wound in the head from a rifle ball laid him senseless on the earth. There his body remained when the battle was over, and the victors were leading off the horses. His wife hung over him with frantic lamentations. The conquerors paused and urged her to leave the lifeless renegade, and return with them to her kindred. She refused to listen to their solicitations, and they passed on. As she sat watching the

features of Kosato, and giving way to passionate grief, she thought she perceived him to breathe. She was not mistaken. The ball, which had been nearly spent before it struck him, had stunned instead of killing him. By the ministry of his faithful wife, he gradually recovered; reviving to a redoubled love for her, and hatred of his tribe.

As to the female who had so bravely defended her husband, she was elevated by the tribe to a rank far above her sex, and, beside other honorable distinctions, was thenceforward permitted to take a part in the war dances of the braves!

CHAPTER XVII.

OPENING OF THE CACHES.—DETACHMENTS OF CERRÉ AND HODGKISS.—SALMON RIVER MOUNTAINS.—SUPERSTITION OF AN INDIAN TRAPPER.—GODIN'S RIVER.—PREPARATIONS FOR TRAPPINGS.—AN ALARM. — AN INTERRUPTION. —A RIVAL BAND. — PHENOMENA OF SNAKE RIVER PLAIN.—VAST CLEFTS AND CHASMS.—INGULFED STREAMS.—SUBLIME SCENERY. — A GRAND BUFFALO HUNT.

APTAIN BONNEVILLE found his caches perfectly secure, and having secretly opened them, he selected such articles as were necessary to equip the free trappers, and to supply the inconsiderable trade with the Indians, after which he closed them again. The free trappers being newly rigged out and supplied, were in high spirits, and swaggered gayly about the camp. To compensate all hands for past sufferings, and to give a cheerful spur to further operations, Captain Bonneville now gave the men what, in frontier phrase, is termed "a regular blow out." It was a day of uncouth gambols and frolics, and rude feasting. The Indians joined in the sports and games, and all was mirth and good fellowship.

It was now the middle of March, and Captain Bonneville made preparations to open the spring campaign.

He had pitched upon Malade River for his main trapping ground for the season. This is a stream which rises among the great bed of mountains north of the lava plain, and after a winding course, falls into Snake River. Previous to his departure, the Captain dispatched Mr. Cerré with a few men, to visit the Indian villages and purchase horses; he furnished his clerk, Mr. Hodgkiss, also with a small stock of goods, to keep up a trade with the Indians during the spring, for such peltries as they might collect, appointing the caches on Salmon River as the point of rendezvous, where they were to rejoin him on the 15th of June following.

This done, he set out for Malade River with a band of twenty-eight men, composed of hired and free trappers, and Indian hunters, together with eight squaws. Their route lay up along the right fork of Salmon River, as it passes through the deep defile of the mountains. They travelled very slowly, not above five miles a day, for many of the horses were so weak that they faltered and staggered as they walked. Pasturage, however, was now growing plentiful. There was abundance of fresh grass, which in some places had attained such height as to wave in the wind. The native flocks of the wilderness, the mountain sheep, as they are called by the trappers, were continually to be seen upon the hills between which they passed, and a good supply of mutton was provided by the hunters, as they were advancing towards a region of scarcity.

In the course of his journey, Captain Bonneville had occasion to remark an instance of the many notions, and almost superstitions, which prevail among the Indians, and among some of the white men, with respect to the sagacity of the beaver. The Indian hunters of his party were in the habit of exploring all the streams along which they passed, in search of "beaver lodges," and occasionally set their traps with some success. One of them, however, though an experienced and skillful trapper, was invariably unsuccessful. Astonished and mortified at such unusual bad luck, he at length conceived the idea, that there was some odor about his person, of which the beaver got scent, and retreated at his approach. He immediately set about a thorough purification. Making a rude sweating house on the banks of the river, he would shut himself up until in a reeking perspiration, and then suddenly emerging, would plunge into the river. A number of these sweatings and plungings having, as he supposed, rendered his person perfectly "inodorous," he resumed his trapping with renovated hope.

About the beginning of April, they encamped upon Godin's River, where they found the swamp full of "muskrat houses." Here, therefore, Captain Bonneville determined to remain a few days and make his first regular attempt at trapping. That his maiden campaign might open with spirit, he promised the Indians and free trappers an extra price for every muskrat they should

take. All now set to work for the next day's sport. The utmost animation and gayety prevailed throughout the camp. Everything looked auspicious for their spring campaign. The abundance of muskrats in the swamp, was but an earnest of the nobler game they were to find when they should reach the Malade River, and have a capital beaver country all to themselves, where they might trap at their leisure without molestation.

In the midst of their gayety, a hunter came galloping into the camp, shouting, or rather yelling, "A trail! a trail!—lodge poles! lodge poles!"

These were words full of meaning to a trapper's ear. They intimated that there was some band in the neighborhood, and probably a hunting party, as they had lodge poles for an encampment. The hunter came up and told his story. He had discovered a fresh trail, in which the traces made by the dragging of lodge poles were distinctly visible. The buffalo, too, had just been driven out of the neighborhood, which showed that the hunters had already been on the range.

The gayety of the camp was at an end; all preparations for muskrat trapping were suspended, and all hands sallied forth to examine the trail. Their worst fears were soon confirmed. Infallible signs showed the unknown party in the advance to be white men; doubtless, some rival band of trappers! Here was competition when least expected; and that, too, by a party already in the advance, who were driving the game before

them. Captain Bonneville had now a taste of the sudden transitions to which a trapper's life is subject. The buoyant confidence in an uninterrupted hunt was at an end; every countenance lowered with gloom and disappointment.

Captain Bonneville immediately dispatched two spies to overtake the rival party, and endeavor to learn their plans; in the meantime, he turned his back upon the swamp and its muskrat houses, and followed on at "long camps," which, in trapper's language, is equivalent to long stages. On the 6th of April, he met his spies returning. They had kept on the trail like hounds, until they overtook the party at the south end of Godin's Defile. Here they found them comfortably encamped, twenty-two prime trappers, all well appointed, with excellent horses in capital condition, led by Milton Sublette, and an able coadjutor, named Jarvie, and in full march for the Malade hunting ground.

This was stunning news. The Malade River was the only trapping ground within reach; but to have to compete there with veteran trappers, perfectly at home among the mountains, and admirably mounted, while they were so poorly provided with horses and trappers, and had but one man in their party acquainted with the country—it was out of the question!

The only hope that now remained, was that the snow, which still lay deep among the mountains of Godin River, and blocked up the usual pass to the Malade

country, might detain the other party, until Captain Bonneville's horses should get once more into good condition in their present ample pasturage.

The rival parties now encamped together, not out of companionship, but to keep an eye upon each other. Day after day passed by, without any possibility of getting to the Malade country. Sublette and Jarvie endeavored to force their way across the mountain; but the snows lay so deep as to oblige them to turn back. In the meantime, the captain's horses were daily gaining strength, and their hoofs improving, which had been worn and battered by mountain service. The captain, also, was increasing his stock of provisions, so that the delay was all in his favor.

To any one who merely contemplates a map of the country, this difficulty of getting from Godin to Malade River will appear inexplicable, as the intervening mountains terminate in the great Snake River plain, so that, apparently, it would be perfectly easy to proceed round their bases.

Here, however, occur some of the striking phenomena of this wild and sublime region. The great lower plain which extends to the feet of these mountains is broken up near their bases into crests and ridges, resembling the surges of the ocean breaking on a rocky shore.

In a line with the mountains, the plain is gashed with numerous and dangerous chasms, from four to ten feet wide, and of great depth. Captain Bonneville attempted

to sound some of these openings, but without any satisfactory result. A stone dropped into one of them reverberated against the sides for apparently a very great depth, and, by its sound, indicated the same kind of substance with the surface, as long as the strokes could be heard. The horse, instinctively sagacious in avoiding danger shrinks back in alarm from the least of these chasms; pricking up his ears, snorting and pawing, until permitted to turn away.

We have been told by a person well acquainted with the country, that it is sometimes necessary to travel fifty and sixty miles, to get round one of these tremendous ravines. Considerable streams, like that of Godin's River, that run with a bold, free current, lose themselves in this plain; some of them end in swamps, others suddenly disappear; finding, no doubt, subterranean outlets.

Opposite to these chasms, Snake River makes two desperate leaps over precipices, at a short distance from each other; one twenty, the other forty feet in height.

The volcanic plain in question forms an area of about sixty miles in diameter, where nothing meets the eye but a desolate and awful waste; where no grass grows nor water runs, and where nothing is to be seen but lava. Ranges of mountains skirt this plain, and, in Captain Bonneville's opinion, were formerly connected, until rent asunder by some convulsion of nature. Far to the east, the Three Tetons lift their heads sublimely, and domi-

nate this wide sea of lava;—one of the most striking features of a wilderness where everything seems on a scale of stern and simple grandeur.

We look forward with impatience for some able geologist to explore this sublime, but almost unknown region.

It was not until the 25th of April, that the two parties of trappers broke up their encampments, and undertook to cross over the southwest end of the mountain by a pass explored by their scouts. From various points of the mountain, they commanded boundless prospects of the lava plain, stretching away in cold and gloomy barrenness as far as the eye could reach. On the evening of the 26th, they reached the plain west of the mountain, watered by the Malade, the Boisée, and other streams, which comprised the contemplated trapping ground.

The country about the Boisée (or Woody) River, is extolled by Captain Bonneville as the most enchanting he had seen in the Far West: presenting the mingled grandeur and beauty of mountain and plain; of bright running streams and vast grassy meadows waving to the breeze.

We shall not follow the captain throughout his trapping campaign, which lasted until the beginning of June; nor detail all the maneuvers of the rival trapping parties, and their various schemes to outwit and out-trap each other. Suffice it to say, that after having visited and camped about various streams with various success, Captain Bonneville set forward early in June for the

appointed rendezvous at the caches. On the way, he treated his party to a grand buffalo hunt. The scouts had reported numerous herds in a plain beyond an intervening height. There was an immediate halt; the fleetest horses were forthwith mounted, and the party advanced to the summit of the hill. Hence they beheld the great plain below absolutely swarming with buffalo. Captain Bonneville now appointed the place where he would encamp; and towards which the hunters were to drive the game. He cautioned the latter to advance slowly, reserving the strength and speed of the horses, until within a moderate distance of the herds. Twenty-two horsemen descended cautiously into the plain, conformably to these directions. "It was a beautiful sight," says the captain, "to see the runners, as they are called, advancing in column, at a slow trot, until within two hundred and fifty yards of the outskirts of the herd, then dashing on at full speed, until lost in the immense multitude of buffaloes scouring the plain in every direction." All was now tumult and wild confusion. In the meantime, Captain Bonneville and the residue of the party moved on to the appointed camping ground; thither the most expert runners succeeded in driving numbers of buffalo, which were killed hard by the camp, and the flesh transported thither without difficulty. In a little while the whole camp looked like one great slaughter-house; the carcasses were skillfully cut up, great fires were made, scaffolds erected for drying and jerking beef,

and an ample provision was made for future subsistence. On the 15th of June, the precise day appointed for the rendezvous, Captain Bonneville and his party arrived safely at the caches.

Here he was joined by the other detachments of his main party, all in good health and spirits. The *caches* were again opened, supplies of various kinds taken out, and a liberal allowance of *aqua vitæ* distributed throughout the camp, to celebrate with proper conviviality this merry meeting.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MEETING WITH HODGKISS.—MISFORTUNES OF THE NEZ PERCÉS.—SCHEMES OF KOSATO, THE RENEGADO—HIS FORAY INTO THE HORSE PRAIRIE.—INVASION OF BLACKFEET.—BLUE JOHN, AND HIS FORLORN HOPE—THEIR GENEROUS ENTERPRISE—THEIR FATE.—CONSTERNATION AND DESPAIR OF THE VILLAGE.—SOLEMN OBSEQUIES.—ATTEMPT AT INDIAN TRADE.—HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S MONOPOLY.—ARRANGEMENTS FOR AUTUMN.—BREAKING UP OF AN ENCAMPMENT.

HAVING now a pretty strong party, well armed and equipped, Captain Bonneville no longer felt the necessity of fortifying himself in the secret places and fastnesses of the mountains; but sallied forth boldly into the Snake River plain, in search of his clerk, Hodgkiss, who had remained with the Nez Percés. He found him on the 24th of June, and learnt from him another chapter of misfortunes which had recently befallen that ill-fated race.

After the departure of Captain Bonneville, in March, Kosato, the renegade Blackfoot, had recovered from the wound received in battle; and with his strength revived all his deadly hostility to his native tribe. He now resumed his efforts to stir up the Nez Percés to reprisals upon their old enemies; reminding them incessantly of

all the outrages and robberies they had recently experienced, and assuring them that such would continue to be their lot, until they proved themselves men by some signal retaliation.

The impassioned eloquence of the desperado at length produced an effect; and a band of braves enlisted under his guidance, to penetrate into the Blackfoot country, harass their villages, carry off their horses, and commit all kinds of depredations.

Kosato pushed forward on his foray, as far as the Horse Prairie; where he came upon a strong party of Blackfeet. Without waiting to estimate their force, he attacked them with characteristic fury, and was bravely seconded by his followers. The contest, for a time, was hot and bloody: at length, as is customary with these two tribes, they paused, and held a long parley, or rather a war of words.

"What need," said the Blackfoot chief, tauntingly, "have the Nez Percés to leave their homes, and sally forth on war parties, when they have danger enough at their own doors? If you want fighting, return to your villages; you will have plenty of it there. The Blackfeet warriors have hitherto made war upon you as children. They are now coming as men. A great force is at hand; they are on their way to your towns, and are determined to rub out the very name of the Nez Percés from the mountains. Return, I say, to your towns, and fight there, if you wish to live any longer as a people."

Kosato took him at his word; for he knew the character of his native tribe. Hastening back with his band to the Nez Percé village, he told all that he had seen and heard; and urged the most prompt and strenuous measures for defense. The Nez Percés, however, heard him with their accustomed phlegm: the threat of the Blackfeet had been often made, and as often had proved a mere bravado; such they pronounced it to be at present, and, of course, took no precautions.

They were soon convinced that it was no empty menace. In a few days, a band of three hundred Blackfeet warriors appeared upon the hills. All now was consternation in the village. The force of the Nez Percés was too small to cope with the enemy in open fight; many of the young men having gone to their relatives on the Columbia to procure horses. The sages met in hurried council. What was to be done to ward off a blow which threatened annihilation? In this moment of imminent peril, a Pierced-nose chief, named Blue John by the whites, offered to approach secretly with a small, but chosen band, through a defile which led to the encampment of the enemy, and, by a sudden onset, to drive off the horses. Should this blow be successful, the spirit and strength of the invaders would be broken, and the Nez Percés, having horses, would be more than a match for them. Should it fail, the village would not be worse off than at present, when destruction appeared inevitable.

Twenty-nine of the choicest warriors instantly volun-

teered to follow Blue John in this hazardous enterprise. They prepared for it with the solemnity and devotion peculiar to the tribe. Blue John consulted his medicine, or talismanic charm, such as every chief keeps in his lodge as a supernatural protection. The oracle assured him that his enterprise would be completely successful, provided no rain should fall before he had passed through the defile; but should it rain, his band would be utterly cut off.

The day was clear and bright; and Blue John anticipated that the skies would be propitious. He departed in high spirits with his forlorn hope; and never did band of braves make a more gallant display—horsemen and horses being decorated and equipped in the fiercest and most glaring style—glittering with arms and ornaments, and fluttering with feathers.

The weather continued serene until they reached the defile; but just as they were entering it, a black cloud rose over the mountain crest, and there was a sudden shower. The warriors turned to their leader as if to read his opinion of this unlucky omen; but the countenance of Blue John remained unchanged, and they continued to press forward. It was their hope to make their way, undiscovered, to the very vicinity of the Blackfoot camp; but they had not proceeded far in the defile, when they met a scouting party of the enemy. They attacked and drove them among the hills, and were pursuing them with great eagerness, when they heard shouts and yells

behind them, and beheld the main body of the Blackfeet advancing.

The second chief wavered a little at the sight, and proposed an instant retreat. "We came to fight!" replied Blue John, sternly. Then giving his war-whoop, he sprang forward to the conflict. His braves followed him. They made a headlong charge upon the enemy; not with the hope of victory, but the determination to sell their lives dearly. A frightful carnage rather than a regular battle, succeeded. The forlorn band laid heaps of their enemies dead at their feet, but were overwhelmed with numbers, and pressed into a gorge of the mountain, where they continued to fight until they were cut to pieces. One, only, of the thirty survived. He sprang on the horse of a Blackfoot warrior whom he had slain, and escaping at full speed, brought home the baleful tidings to his village.

Who can paint the horror and desolation of the inhabitants? The flower of their warriors laid low, and a ferocious enemy at their doors. The air was rent by the shrieks and lamentations of the women, who, casting off their ornaments, and tearing their hair, wandered about, frantically bewailing the dead, and predicting destruction to the living. The remaining warriors armed themselves for obstinate defense; but showed by their gloomy looks and sullen silence, that they considered defense hopeless. To their surprise, the Blackfeet refrained from pursuing their advantage; perhaps satisfied with

the blood already shed, or disheartened by the loss they had themselves sustained. At any rate, they disappeared from the hills, and it was soon ascertained that they had returned to the Horse Prairie.

The unfortunate Nez Pèrcés now began once more to breathe. A few of their warriors, taking pack-horses, repaired to the defile to bring away the bodies of their slaughtered brethren. They found them mere headless trunks; and the wounds with which they were covered, showed how bravely they had fought. Their hearts, too, had been torn out and carried off; a proof of their signal valor; for in devouring the heart of a foe renowned for bravery, or who has distinguished himself in battle, the Indian victor thinks he appropriates to himself the courage of the deceased.

Gathering the mangled bodies of the slain, and strapping them across their pack-horses, the warriors returned, in dismal procession, to the village. The tribe came forth to meet them; the women with piercing cries and wailings; the men with downcast countenances, in which gloom and sorrow seemed fixed as if in marble. The mutilated and almost undistinguishable bodies were placed in rows upon the ground, in the midst of the assemblage; and the scene of heart-rending anguish and lamentation that ensued, would have confounded those who insist on Indian stoicism.

Such was the disastrous event that had overwhelmed the Nez Percé tribe, during the absence of Captain

Bonneville; and he was informed that Kosato, the renegade, who, being stationed in the village, had been prevented from going on the forlorn hope, was again striving to rouse the vindictive feelings of his adopted brethren, and to prompt them to revenge the slaughter of their devoted braves.

During his sojourn on the Snake River plain, Captain Bonneville made one of his first essays at the strategy of the fur trade. There was at this time an assemblage of Nez Percés, Flatheads, and Cottonois Indians, encamped together upon the plain; well provided with beaver, which they had collected during the spring. These they were waiting to traffic with a resident trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was stationed among them, and with whom they were accustomed to deal. As it happened, the trader was almost entirely destitute of Indian goods; his spring supply not having yet reached him. Captain Bonneville had secret intelligence that supplies were on their way, and would soon arrive; he hoped, however, by a prompt move, to anticipate their arrival, and secure the market to himself. Throwing himself, therefore, among the Indians, he opened his packs of merchandise, and displayed the most tempting wares; bright cloths, and scarlet blankets, and glittering ornaments, and everything gay and glorious in the eyes of warrior or squaw; all, however, was in vain. The Hudson's Bay trader was a perfect master of his business, thoroughly acquainted with the Indians he had to deal

with, and held such control over them, that none dared to act openly in opposition to his wishes: nay more—he came nigh turning the tables upon the captain, and shaking the allegiance of some of his free trappers, by distributing liquors among them. The latter, therefore, was glad to give up a competition, where the war was likely to be carried into his own camp.

In fact, the traders of the Hudson's Bay Company have advantages over all competitors in the trade beyond the Rocky Mountains. That huge monopoly centres within itself not merely its own hereditary and long-established power and influence; but also those of its ancient rival, but now integral part, the famous North-west Company. It has thus its races of traders, trappers, hunters, and voyageurs, born and brought up in its service, and inheriting from preceding generations a knowledge and aptitude in everything connected with Indian life, and Indian traffic. In the process of years, this company has been enabled to spread its ramifications in every direction; its system of intercourse is founded upon a long and intimate knowledge of the character and necessities of the various tribes; and of all the fastnesses, defiles, and favorable hunting grounds of the country. Their capital, also, and the manner in which their supplies are distributed at various posts, or forwarded by regular caravans, keep their traders well supplied, and enable them to furnish their goods to the Indians at a cheap rate. Their men, too, being chiefly

drawn from the Canadas, where they enjoy great influence and control, are engaged at the most trifling wages, and supported at little cost; the provisions which they take with them being little more than Indian corn and grease. They are brought, also, into the most perfect discipline and subordination, especially when their leaders have once got them to their scene of action in the heart of the wilderness.

These circumstances combine to give the leaders of the Hudson's Bay Company a decided advantage over all the American companies that come within their range; so that any close competition with them is almost hopeless.

Shortly after Captain Bonneville's ineffectual attempt to participate in the trade of the associated camp, the supplies of the Hudson's Bay Company arrived; and the resident trader was enabled to monopolize the market.

It was now the beginning of July; in the latter part of which month, Captain Bonneville had appointed a rendezvous at Horse Creek, in Green River Valley, with some of the parties which he had detached in the preceding year. He now turned his thoughts in that direction, and prepared for the journey.

The Cottonois were anxious for him to proceed at once to their country; which, they assured him, abounded in beaver. The lands of this tribe lie immediately north of those of the Flatheads, and are open to the inroads of the Blackfeet. It is true, the latter professed to be their allies; but they had been guilty of so many acts of per-

fidy, that the Cottonois had, latterly, renounced their hollow friendship, and attached themselves to the Flatheads and Nez Percés. These they had accompanied in their migrations, rather than remain alone at home, exposed to the outrages of the Blackfeet. They were now apprehensive that these marauders would range their country during their absence, and destroy the beaver: this was their reason for urging Captain Bonneville to make it his autumnal hunting ground. The latter, however, was not to be tempted: his engagements required his presence at the rendezvous in Green River Valley; and he had already formed his ulterior plans.

An unexpected difficulty now arose. The free trappers suddenly made a stand, and declined to accompany him. It was a long and weary journey; the route lay through Pierre's Hole, and other mountain passes infested by the Blackfeet, and recently the scenes of sanguinary conflicts. They were not disposed to undertake such unnecessary toils and dangers, when they had good and secure trapping grounds nearer at hand, on the head waters of Salmon River.

As these were free and independent fellows, whose will and whim were apt to be law—who had the whole wilderness before them, "where to choose," and the trader of a rival company at hand, ready to pay for their services—it was necessary to bend to their wishes. Captain Bonneville fitted them out, therefore, for the hunting ground in question: appointing Mr. Hodgkiss to act as their

partisan, or leader, and fixing a rendezvous where he should meet them in the course of the ensuing winter. The brigade consisted of twenty-one free trappers, and four or five hired men as camp-keepers. This was not the exact arrangement of a trapping party; which, when accurately organized, is composed of two thirds trappers, whose duty leads them continually abroad in pursuit of game; and one third camp-keepers, who cook, pack, and unpack; set up the tents, take care of the horses, and do all other duties usually assigned by the Indians to their women. This part of the service is apt to be fulfilled by French creoles from Canada and the valley of the Mississippi.

In the meantime, the associated Indians, having completed their trade and received their supplies, were all ready to disperse in various directions.

As there was a formidable band of Blackfeet just over a mountain to the northeast, by which Hodgkiss and his free trappers would have to pass; and as it was known that those sharp-sighted marauders had their scouts out, watching every movement of the encampments, so as to cut off stragglers or weak detachments, Captain Bonneville prevailed upon the Nez Percés to accompany Hodgkiss and his party, until they should be beyond the range of the enemy.

The Cottonois, and the Pends Oreilles, determined to move together at the same time, and to pass close under the mountain infested by the Blackfeet; while Captain

Bonneville, with his party, was to strike in an opposite direction to the southeast, bending his course for Pierre's Hole, on his way to Green River.

Accordingly, on the 6th of July, all the camps were raised at the same moment; each party taking its separate route. The scene was wild and picturesque: the long line of traders, trappers, and Indians, with their rugged and fantastic dresses and accoutrements; their varied weapons, their innumerable horses, some under the saddle, some burdened with packages, others following in droves; all stretching in lengthening cavalcades across the vast landscape, and making for different points of the plains and mountains.

CHAPTER XIX.

PRECAUTIONS IN DANGEROUS DEFILES.—TRAPPERS' MODE OF DEFENSE ON A PRAIRIE.—A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.—ARRIVAL IN GREEN RIVER VALLEY.—ADVENTURES OF THE DETACHMENTS.—THE FORLORN PARTISAN—HIS TALE OF DISASTERS.

AS the route of Captain Bonneville lay through what was considered the most perilous part of this region of dangers, he took all his measures with military skill, and observed the strictest circumspection. When on the march, a small scouting party was thrown in the advance, to reconnoitre the country through which they were to pass. The encampments were selected with great care, and a watch was kept up night and day. The horses were brought in and picketed at night, and at daybreak a party was sent out to scour the neighborhood for half a mile round, beating up every grove and thicket that could give shelter to a lurking foe. When all was reported safe, the horses were cast loose and turned out to graze. Were such precautions generally observed by traders and hunters, we should not so often hear of parties being surprised by the Indians.

Having stated the military arrangements of the captain, we may here mention a mode of defense on the open prairie, which we have heard from a veteran in the Indian trade. When a party of trappers is on a journey with a convoy of goods or peltries, every man has three pack-horses under his care; each horse laden with three packs. Every man is provided with a picket with an iron head, a mallet, and hobbles, or leathern fetters for the horses. The trappers proceed across the prairie in a long line; or sometimes three parallel lines, sufficiently distant from each other to prevent the packs from interfering. At an alarm, when there is no covert at hand, the line wheels so as to bring the front to the rear and form a circle. All then dismount, drive their pickets into the ground in the centre, fasten the horses to them, and hobble their fore legs, so that, in case of alarm, they cannot break away. They then unload them, and dispose of their packs as breastworks on the periphery of the circle; each man having nine packs behind which to shelter himself. In this promptly-formed fortress, they await the assault of the enemy, and are enabled to set large bands of Indians at defiance.

The first night of his march, Captain Bonneville encamped upon Henry's Fork; an upper branch of Snake River, called after the first American trader that erected a fort beyond the mountains. About an hour after all hands had come to a halt the clatter of hoofs was heard, and a solitary female, of the Nez Percé tribe, came gal-

loping up. She was mounted on a mustang, or half-wild horse, which she managed by a long rope hitched round the under jaw by way of bridle. Dismounting, she walked silently into the midst of the camp, and there seated herself on the ground, still holding her horse by the long halter.

The sudden and lonely apparition of this woman, and her calm, yet resolute demeanor, awakened universal curiosity. The hunters and trappers gathered round, and gazed on her as something mysterious. She remained silent, but maintained her air of calmness and self-possession. Captain Bonneville approached and interrogated her as to the object of her mysterious visit. Her answer was brief but earnest—"I love the whites—I will go with them." She was forthwith invited to a lodge, of which she readily took possession, and from that time forward was considered one of the camp.

In consequence, very probably, of the military precautions of Captain Bonneville, he conducted his party in safety through this hazardous region. No accident of a disastrous kind occurred, excepting the loss of a horse, which, in passing along the giddy edge of the precipice, called the Cornice, a dangerous pass between Jackson's and Pierre's Hole, fell over the brink and was dashed to pieces.

On the 13th of July, (1833,) Captain Bonneville arrived at Green River. As he entered the valley, he beheld it strewed in every direction with the carcasses of buffaloes.

It was evident that Indians had recently been there, and in great numbers. Alarmed at this sight, he came to a halt, and as soon as it was dark, sent out spies to his place of rendezvous on Horse Creek, where he had expected to meet with his detached parties of trappers on the following day. Early in the morning, the spies made their appearance in the camp, and with them came three trappers of one of his bands, from the rendezvous, who told him his people were all there expecting him. As to the slaughter among the buffaloes, it had been made by a friendly band of Shoshonies, who had fallen in with one of his trapping parties, and accompanied them to the rendezvous. Having imparted this intelligence, the three worthies from the rendezvous broached a small keg of "alcohol," which they had brought with them, to enliven this merry meeting. The liquor went briskly round; all absent friends were toasted, and the party moved forward to the rendezvous in high spirits.

The meeting of associated bands, who have been separated from each other on these hazardous enterprises, is always interesting; each having its tale of perils and adventures to relate. Such was the case with the various detachments of Captain Bonneville's company, thus brought together on Horse Creek. Here was the detachment of fifty men which he had sent from Salmon River, in the preceding month of November, to winter on Snake River. They had met with many crosses and losses in the course of their spring hunt, not so much

from Indians as from white men. They had come in competition with rival trapping parties, particularly one belonging to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company; and they had long stories to relate of their maneuvers to forestall or distress each other. In fact, in these virulent and sordid competitions, the trappers of each party were more intent upon injuring their rivals, than benefiting themselves; breaking each other's traps, trampling and tearing to pieces the beaver lodges, and doing everything in their power to mar the success of the hunt. We forbear to detail these pitiful contentions.

The most lamentable tale of disasters, however, that Captain Bonneville had to hear, was from a partisan, whom he had detached in the preceding year, with twenty men, to hunt through the outskirts of the Crow country, and on the tributary streams of the Yellowstone; whence he was to proceed and join him in his winter quarters on Salmon River. This partisan appeared at the rendezvous without his party, and a sorrowful tale of disasters had he to relate. In hunting the Crow country, he fell in with a village of that tribe; notorious rogues, jockeys, and horse stealers, and errant scamperers of the mountains. These decoyed most of his men to desert, and carry off horses, traps, and accoutrements. When he attempted to retake the deserters, the Crow warriors ruffled up to him and declared the deserters were their good friends, had determined to remain among them, and should not be molested. The

poor partisan, therefore, was fain to leave his vagabonds among these birds of their own feather, and, being too weak in numbers to attempt the dangerous pass across the mountains to meet Captain Bonneville on Salmon River, he made, with the few that remained faithful to him, for the neighborhood of Tullock's Fort, on the Yellowstone, under the protection of which he went into winter quarters.

He soon found out that the neighborhood of the fort was nearly as bad as the neighborhood of the Crows. His men were continually stealing away thither, with whatever beaver skins they could secrete or lay their hands on. These they would exchange with the hangers-on of the fort for whisky, and then revel in drunkenness and debauchery.

The unlucky partisan made another move. Associating with his party a few free trappers, whom he met with in this neighborhood, he started off early in the spring to trap on the head waters of Powder River. In the course of the journey, his horses were so much jaded in traversing a steep mountain, that he was induced to turn them loose to graze during the night. The place was lonely; the path was rugged; there was not the sign of an Indian in the neighborhood; not a blade of grass that had been turned by a footstep. But who can calculate on security in the midst of the Indian country, where the foe lurks in silence and secrecy, and seems to come and go on the wings of the wind? The horses had

scarce been turned loose, when a couple of Arickara (or Rickaree) warriors entered the camp. They affected a frank and friendly demeanor; but their appearance and movements awakened the suspicions of some of the veteran trappers, well versed in Indian wiles. Convinced that they were spies sent on some sinister errand, they took them in custody, and set to work to drive in the horses. It was too late—the horses were already gone. In fact, a war party of Arickaras had been hovering on their trail for several days, watching with the patience and perseverance of Indians, for some moment of negligence and fancied security, to make a successful swoop. The two spies had evidently been sent into the camp to create a diversion, while their confederates carried off the spoil.

The unlucky partisan, thus robbed of his horses, turned furiously on his prisoners, ordered them to be bound hand and foot, and swore to put them to death unless his property were restored. The robbers, who soon found that their spies were in captivity, now made their appearance on horseback, and held a parley. The sight of them, mounted on the very horses they had stolen, set the blood of the mountaineers in a ferment; but it was useless to attack them, as they would have but to turn their steeds and scamper out of the reach of pedestrians. A negotiation was now attempted. The Arickaras offered what they considered fair terms; to barter one horse, or even two horses, for a prisoner.

The mountaineers spurned at their offer, and declared that, unless all the horses were relinquished, the prisoners should be burnt to death. To give force to their threat, a pyre of logs and fagots was heaped up and kindled into a blaze.

The parley continued; the Arickaras released one horse and then another, in earnest of their proposition; finding, however, that nothing short of the relinquishment of all their spoils would purchase the lives of the captives, they abandoned them to their fate, moving off with many parting words and lamentable howlings. The prisoners seeing them depart, and knowing the horrible fate that awaited them, made a desperate effort to escape. They partially succeeded, but were severely wounded and retaken; then dragged to the blazing pyre, and burnt to death in the sight of their retreating comrades.

Such are the savage cruelties that white men learn to practice, who mingle in savage life: and such are the acts that lead to terrible recrimination on the part of the Indians. Should we hear of any atrocities committed by the Arickaras upon captive white men, let this signal and recent provocation be borne in mind. Individual cases of the kind dwell in the recollections of whole tribes; and it is a point of honor and conscience to revenge them.

The loss of his horses completed the ruin of the unlucky partisan. It was out of his power to prosecute his hunting, or to maintain his party; the only thought now

was how to get back to civilized life. At the first water-course, his men built canoes, and committed themselves to the stream. Some engaged themselves at various trading establishments at which they touched, others got back to the settlements. As to the partisan, he found an opportunity to make his way to the rendezvous at Green River Valley; which he reached in time to render to Captain Bonneville this forlorn account of his misadventures.

CHAPTER XX.

GATHERING IN GREEN RIVER VALLEY.—VISITINGS AND FEASTINGS OF LEADERS.—ROUGH WASSAILING AMONG THE TRAPPERS.—WILD BLADES OF THE MOUNTAINS.—INDIAN BELLES.—POTENCY OF BRIGHT BEADS AND RED BLANKETS.—ARRIVAL OF SUPPLIES.—REVELRY AND EXTRAVAGANCE.—MAD WOLVES.—THE LOST INDIAN.

THE Green River Valley was at this time the scene of one of those general gatherings of traders, trappers, and Indians, that we have already mentioned. The three rival companies, which, for a year past had been endeavoring to out-trade, out-trap, and out-wit each other, were here encamped in close proximity, awaiting their annual supplies. About four miles from the rendezvous of Captain Bonneville was that of the American Fur Company, hard by which, was that also of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

After the eager rivalry and almost hostility displayed by these companies in their late campaigns, it might be expected that, when thus brought in juxtaposition, they would hold themselves warily and sternly aloof from each other, and, should they happen to come in contact, brawl and bloodshed would ensue.

No such thing! Never did rival lawyers, after a

wrangle at the bar, meet with more social good humor at a circuit dinner. The hunting season over, all past tricks and maneuvers are forgotten, all feuds and bickerings buried in oblivion. From the middle of June to the middle of September, all trapping is suspended; for the beavers are then shedding their furs, and their skins are of little value. This, then, is the trapper's holiday, when he is all for fun and frolic, and ready for a saturnalia among the mountains.

At the present season, too, all parties were in good humor. The year had been productive. Competition, by threatening to lessen their profits, had quickened their wits, roused their energies, and made them turn every favorable chance to the best advantage; so that, on assembling at their respective places of rendezvous, each company found itself in possession of a rich stock of peltries.

The leaders of the different companies, therefore, mingled on terms of perfect good fellowship; interchanging visits, and regaling each other in the best style their respective camps afforded. But the rich treat for the worthy captain was to see the "chivalry" of the various encampments, engaged in contests of skill at running, jumping, wrestling, shooting with the rifle, and running horses. And then their rough hunters' feastings and carousals. They drank together, they sang, they laughed, they whooped; they tried to outbrag and outlie each other in stories of their adventures and achievements.

Here the free trappers were in all their glory; they considered themselves the "cocks of the walk," and always carried the highest crests. Now and then familiarity was pushed too far, and would effervesce into a brawl, and a "rough and tumble" fight; but it all ended in cordial reconciliation and maudlin endearment.

The presence of the Shoshonie tribe contributed occasionally to cause temporary jealousies and feuds. The Shoshonie beauties became objects of rivalry among some of the amorous mountaineers. Happy was the trapper who could muster up a red blanket, a string of gay beads, or a paper of precious vermilion, with which to win the smiles of a Shoshonie fair one.

The caravans of supplies arrived at the valley just at this period of gallantry and good-fellowship. Now commenced a scene of eager competition and wild prodigality at the different encampments. Bales were hastily ripped open, and their motley contents poured forth. A mania for purchasing spread itself throughout the several bands,—munitions for war, for hunting, for gallantry, were seized upon with equal avidity—rifles, hunting knives, traps, scarlet cloth, red blankets, gairish beads, and glittering trinkets, were bought at any price, and scores run up without any thought how they were ever to be rubbed off. The free trappers, especially, were extravagant in their purchases. For a free mountaineer to pause at a paltry consideration of dollars and cents, in the attainment of any object that might strike his

fancy, would stamp him with the mark of the beast in the estimation of his comrades. For a trader to refuse one of these free and flourishing blades a credit, whatever unpaid scores might stare him in the face, would be a flagrant affront scarcely to be forgiven.

Now succeeded another outbreak of revelry and extravagance. The trappers were newly fitted out and arrayed, and dashed about with their horses caparisoned in Indian style. The Shoshonie beauties also flaunted about in all the colors of the rainbow. Every freak of prodigality was indulged to its full extent, and in a little while most of the trappers, having squandered away all their wages, and perhaps run knee-deep in debt, were ready for another hard campaign in the wilderness.

During this season of folly and frolic, there was an alarm of mad wolves in the two lower camps. One or more of these animals entered the camps three nights successively, and bit several of the people.

Captain Bonneville relates the case of an Indian, who was a universal favorite in the lower camp. He had been bitten by one of these animals. Being out with a party shortly afterwards, he grew silent and gloomy, and lagged behind the rest as if he wished to leave them. They halted and urged him to move faster, but he entreated them not to approach him, and, leaping from his horse, began to roll frantically on the earth, gnashing his teeth and foaming at the mouth. Still he retained his senses, and warned his companions not to come near him,

as he should not be able to restrain himself from biting them. They hurried off to obtain relief; but on their return he was nowhere to be found. His horse and accoutrements remained upon the spot. Three or four days afterwards a solitary Indian, believed to be the same, was observed crossing a valley, and pursued; but he darted away into the fastnesses of the mountains, and was seen no more.

Another instance we have from a different person who was present in the encampment. One of the men of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company had been bitten. He set out shortly afterwards, in company with two white men, on his return to the settlements. In the course of a few days he showed symptoms of hydrophobia, and became raving towards night. At length, breaking away from his companions, he rushed into a thicket of willows, where they left him to his fate!

CHAPTER XXI.

SCHEMES OF CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE.—THE GREAT SALT LAKE.—EXPEDITION TO EXPLORE IT.—PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY TO THE BIGHORN.

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE now found himself at the head of a hardy, well-seasoned, and well-appointed company of trappers, all benefited by at least one year's experience among the mountains, and capable of protecting themselves from Indian wiles and stratagems, and of providing for their subsistence wherever game was to be found. He had, also, an excellent troop of horses, in prime condition, and fit for hard service. He determined, therefore, to strike out into some of the bolder parts of his scheme. One of these was to carry his expeditions into some of the unknown tracts of the Far West, beyond what is generally termed the buffalo range. This would have something of the merit and charm of discovery, so dear to every brave and adventurous spirit. Another favorite project was to establish a trading post on the lower part of the Columbia River, near the Multnomah Valley, and to endeavor to retrieve for his country some of the lost trade of Astoria.

The first of the above mentioned views was, at present,

uppermost in his mind—the exploring of unknown regions. Among the grand features of the wilderness about which he was roaming, one had made a vivid impression on his mind, and been clothed by his imagination with vague and ideal charms. This is a great lake of salt water, laving the feet of the mountains, but extending far to the west-southwest, into one of those vast and elevated plateaus of land, which range high above the level of the Pacific.

Captain Bonneville gives a striking account of the lake when seen from the land. As you ascend the mountain about its shores, says he, you behold this immense body of water spreading itself before you, and stretching further and further, in one wide and far-reaching expanse, until the eye, wearied with continued and strained attention, rests in the blue dimness of distance, upon lofty ranges of mountains, confidently asserted to rise from the bosom of the waters. Nearer to you, the smooth and unruffled surface is studded with little islands, where the mountain sheep roam in considerable numbers. What extent of lowland may be encompassed by the high peaks beyond, must remain for the present matter of mere conjecture; though from the form of the summits, and the breaks which may be discovered among them, there can be little doubt that they are the sources of streams calculated to water large tracts, which are probably concealed from view by the rotundity of the lake's surface. At some future day, in all probability,

the rich harvest of beaver fur which may be reasonably anticipated in such a spot, will tempt adventurers to reduce all this doubtful region to the palpable certainty of a beaten track. At present, however, destitute of the means of making boats, the trapper stands upon the shore, and gazes upon a promised land which his feet are never to tread.

Such is the somewhat fanciful view which Captain Bonneville gives of this great body of water. He has evidently taken part of his ideas concerning it from the representations of others, who have somewhat exaggerated its features. It is reported to be about one hundred and fifty miles long, and fifty miles broad. The ranges of mountain peaks which Captain Bonneville speaks of, as rising from its bosom, are probably the summits of mountains beyond it, which may be visible at a vast distance, when viewed from an eminence, in the transparent atmosphere of these lofty regions. Several large islands certainly exist in the lake; one of which is said to be mountainous, but not by any means to the extent required to furnish the series of peaks above mentioned.

Captain Sublette, in one of his early expeditions across the mountains, is said to have sent four men in a skin canoe to explore the lake, who professed to have navigated all round it; but to have suffered excessively from thirst, the water of the lake being extremely salt, and there being no fresh streams running into it.

Captain Bonneville doubts this report, or that the men accomplished the circumnavigation, because, he says, the lake receives several large streams from the mountains which bound it to the east. In the spring, when the streams are swollen by rain and by the melting of the snows, the lake rises several feet above its ordinary level; during the summer, it gradually subsides again, leaving a sparkling zone of the finest salt upon its shores.

The elevation of the vast plateau on which this lake is situated, is estimated by Captain Bonneville at one and three fourths of a mile above the level of the ocean. The admirable purity and transparency of the atmosphere in this region, allowing objects to be seen, and the report of fire-arms to be heard, at an astonishing distance; and its extreme dryness, causing the wheels of wagons to fall in pieces, as instanced in former passages of this work, are proofs of the great altitude of the Rocky Mountain plains. That a body of salt water should exist at such a height, is cited as a singular phenomenon by Captain Bonneville, though the salt lake of Mexico is not much inferior in elevation.*

To have this lake properly explored, and all its secrets revealed, was the grand scheme of the captain for the present year; and while it was one in which his imagina-

* The lake of Tezcuco, which surrounds the city of Mexico, the largest and lowest of the five lakes on the Mexican plateau, and one of the most impregnated with saline particles, is seven thousand four hundred and sixty-eight feet, or nearly one mile and a half above the level of the sea.

tion evidently took a leading part, he believed it would be attended with great profit, from the numerous beaver streams with which the lake must be fringed.

This momentous undertaking he confided to his lieutenant, Mr. Walker, in whose experience and ability he had great confidence. He instructed him to keep along the shores of the lake, and trap in all the streams on his route; also to keep a journal, and minutely to record the events of his journey, and everything curious or interesting, making maps or charts of his route, and of the surrounding country.

No pains nor expense were spared in fitting out the party of forty men, which he was to command. They had complete supplies for a year, and were to meet Captain Bonneville in the ensuing summer, in the valley of Bear River, the largest tributary of the Salt Lake, which was to be his point of general rendezvous.

The next care of Captain Bonneville, was to arrange for the safe transportation of the peltries which he had collected, to the Atlantic States. Mr. Robert Campbell, the partner of Sublette, was at this time in the rendezvous of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, having brought up their supplies. He was about to set off on his return, with the peltries collected during the year, and intended to proceed through the Crow country, to the head of navigation on the Bighorn River, and to descend in boats down that river, the Missouri, and the Yellowstone, to St. Louis.

Captain Bonneville determined to forward his peltries by the same route, under the especial care of Mr. Cerré. By way of escort, he would accompany Cerré to the point of embarkation, and then make an autumnal hunt in the Crow country.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CROW COUNTRY.—A CROW PARADISE.—HABITS OF THE CROWS.—ANECDOTES OF ROSE, THE RENEGADE WHITE MAN—HIS FIGHTS WITH THE BLACKFEET—HIS ELEVATION—HIS DEATH.—ARAPOOISH, THE CROW CHIEF—HIS EAGLE.—ADVENTURE OF ROBERT CAMPBELL.—HONOR AMONG CROWS.

EFORE we accompany Captain Bonneville into the Crow country, we will impart a few facts about this wild region, and the wild people who inhabit it. We are not aware of the precise boundaries, if there are any, of the country claimed by the Crows; it appears to extend from the Black Hills to the Rocky Mountains, including a part of their lofty ranges, and embracing many of the plains and valleys watered by the Wind River, the Yellowstone, the Powder River, the Little Missouri, and the Nebraska. The country varies in soil and climate; there are vast plains of sand and clay, studded with large red sand-hills; other parts are mountainous and picturesque; it possesses warm springs, and coal mines, and abounds with game.

But let us give the account of the country, as rendered by Arapooish, a Crow chief, to Mr. Robert Campbell, of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

"The Crow country," said he, "is a good country. The

Great Spirit has put it exactly in the right place; while you are in it you fare well; whenever you go out of it, whichever way you travel, you fare worse.

"If you go to the south, you have to wander over great barren plains: the water is warm and bad, and you meet the fever and ague.

"To the north it is cold; the winters are long and bitter, with no grass; you cannot keep horses there, but must travel with dogs. What is a country without horses?

"On the Columbia they are poor and dirty, paddle about in canoes, and eat fish. Their teeth are worn out; they are always taking fish-bones out of their mouths. Fish is poor food.

"To the east, they dwell in villages; they live well; but they drink the muddy water of the Missouri—that is bad. A Crow's dog would not drink such water.

"About the forks of the Missouri is a fine country; good water; good grass; plenty of buffalo. In summer, it is almost as good as the Crow country; but in winter it is cold; the grass is gone; and there is no salt weed for the horses.

"The Crow country is exactly in the right place. It has snowy mountains and sunny plains; all kinds of climates and good things for every season. When the summer heats scorch the prairies, you can draw up under the mountains, where the air is sweet and cool, the grass fresh, and the bright streams come tumbling out of the snow-banks. There you can hunt the elk, the deer, and

the antelope, when their skins are fit for dressing; there you will find plenty of white bears and mountain sheep.

"In the autumn, when your horses are fat and strong from the mountain pastures, you can go down into the plains and hunt the buffalo, or trap beaver on the streams. And when winter comes on, you can take shelter in the woody bottoms along the rivers; there you will find buffalo meat for yourselves, and cotton-wood bark for your horses: or you may winter in the Wind River Valley, where there is salt weed in abundance.

"The Crow country is exactly in the right place. Everything good is to be found there. There is no country like the Crow country."

Such is the eulogium on his country by Arapooish.

We have had repeated occasions to speak of the restless and predatory habits of the Crows. They can muster fifteen hundred fighting men; but their incessant wars with the Blackfeet, and their vagabond, predatory habits, are gradually wearing them out.

In a recent work, we related the circumstance of a white man named Rose, an outlaw, and a designing vagabond, who acted as guide and interpreter to Mr. Hunt and his party, on their journey across the mountains to Astoria, who came near betraying them into the hands of the Crows, and who remained among the tribe, marrying one of their women, and adopting their congenial habits.* A

* See Astoria.

few anecdotes of the subsequent fortunes of that renegade may not be uninteresting, especially as they are connected with the fortunes of the tribe.

Rose was powerful in frame and fearless in spirit; and soon by his daring deeds took his rank among the first braves of the tribe. He aspired to command, and knew it was only to be attained by desperate exploits. He distinguished himself in repeated actions with the Blackfeet. On one occasion, a band of those savages had fortified themselves within a breastwork, and could not be harmed. Rose proposed to storm the work. "Who will take the lead?" was the demand. "I!" cried he; and putting himself at their head, rushed forward. The first Blackfoot that opposed him he shot down with his rifle, and, snatching up the war-club of his victim, killed four others within the fort. The victory was complete, and Rose returned to the Crow village covered with glory, and bearing five Blackfoot scalps, to be erected as a trophy before his lodge. From this time, he was known among the Crows by the name of Che-ku-kaats, or "the man who killed five." He became chief of the village, or rather band, and for a time was the popular idol. His popularity soon awakened envy among the native braves; he was a stranger, an intruder, a white man. A party seceded from his command. Feuds and civil wars succeeded that lasted for two or three years, until Rose, having contrived to set his adopted brethren by the ears, left them, and went down the Missouri in 1823. Here he

fell in with one of the earliest trapping expeditions sent by General Ashley across the mountains. It was conducted by Smith, Fitzpatrick, and Sublette. Rose enlisted with them as guide and interpreter. When he got them among the Crows, he was exceedingly generous with their goods; making presents to the braves of his adopted tribe, as became a high-minded chief.

This, doubtless, helped to revive his popularity. In that expedition, Smith and Fitzpatrick were robbed of their horses in Green River Valley; the place where the robbery took place still bears the name of Horse Creek. We are not informed whether the horses were stolen through the instigation and management of Rose; it is not improbable, for such was the perfidy he had intended to practice on a former occasion towards Mr. Hunt and his party.

The last anecdote we have of Rose is from an Indian trader. When General Atkinson made his military expedition up the Missouri, in 1825, to protect the fur trade, he held a conference with the Crow nation, at which Rose figured as Indian dignitary and Crow interpreter. The military were stationed at some little distance from the scene of the "big talk;" while the general and the chiefs were smoking pipes and making speeches, the officers, supposing all was friendly, left the troops, and drew near the scene of ceremonial. Some of the more knowing Crows, perceiving this, stole quietly to the camp, and, unobserved, contrived to stop the

touch-holes of the field-pieces with dirt. Shortly after, a misunderstanding occurred in the conference: some of the Indians, knowing the cannon to be useless, became insolent. A tumult arose. In the confusion, Colonel O'Fallon snapped a pistol in the face of a brave, and knocked him down with the butt end. The Crows were all in a fury. A chance-medley fight was on the point of taking place, when Rose, his natural sympathies as a white man suddenly recurring, broke the stock of his fusee over the head of a Crow warrior, and laid so vigorously about him with the barrel, that he soon put the whole throng to flight. Luckily, as no lives had been lost, this sturdy ribroasting calmed the fury of the Crows, and the tumult ended without serious consequences.

What was the ultimate fate of this vagabond hero is not distinctly known. Some report him to have fallen a victim to disease, brought on by his licentious life; others assert that he was murdered in a feud among the Crows. After all, his residence among these savages, and the influence he acquired over them, had, for a time, some beneficial effects. He is said, not merely to have rendered them more formidable to the Blackfeet, but to have opened their eyes to the policy of cultivating the friendship of the white men.

After Rose's death, his policy continued to be cultivated, with indifferent success, by Arapooish, the chief already mentioned, who had been his great friend, and

whose character he had contributed to develop. This sagacious chief endeavored, on every occasion, to restrain the predatory propensities of his tribe when directed against the white men. "If we keep friends with them," said he, "we have nothing to fear from the Blackfeet, and can rule the mountains." Arapooish pretended to be a great "medicine man;" a character among the Indians which is a compound of priest, doctor, prophet, and conjurer. He carried about with him a tame eagle, as his "medicine" or familiar. With the white men, he acknowledged that this was all charlatanism; but said it was necessary, to give him weight and influence among his people.

Mr. Robert Campbell, from whom we have most of these facts, in the course of one of his trapping expeditions, was quartered in the village of Arapooish, and a guest in the lodge of the chieftain. He had collected a large quantity of furs, and, fearful of being plundered, deposited but a part in the lodge of the chief; the rest he buried in a cache. One night, Arapooish came into the lodge with a cloudy brow, and seated himself for a time without saying a word. At length, turning to Campbell, "You have more furs with you," said he, "than you have brought into my lodge?"

"I have," replied Campbell.

"Where are they?"

Campbell knew the uselessness of any prevarication with an Indian; and the importance of complete frank-

ness. He described the exact place where he had concealed his peltries.

"'Tis well," replied Arapooish; "you speak straight. It is just as you say. But your cache has been robbed. Go and see how many skins have been taken from it."

Campbell examined the cache, and estimated his loss to be about one hundred and fifty beaver skins.

Arapooish now summoned a meeting of the village. He bitterly reproached his people for robbing a stranger who had confided to their honor; and commanded that whoever had taken the skins, should bring them back; declaring that, as Campbell was his guest and inmate of his lodge, he would not eat nor drink until every skin was restored to him.

The meeting broke up, and every one dispersed. Arapooish now charged Campbell to give neither reward nor thanks to any one who should bring in the beaver skins, but to keep count as they were delivered.

In a little while, the skins began to make their appearance, a few at a time; they were laid down in the lodge, and those who brought them departed without saying a word. The day passed away. Arapooish sat in one corner of his lodge, wrapped up in his robe, scarcely moving a muscle of his countenance. When night arrived, he demanded if all the skins had been brought in. Above a hundred had been given up, and Campbell expressed himself contented. Not so the Crow chieftain. He fasted all that night, nor tasted a drop of water. In

the morning, some more skins were brought in, and continued to come, one and two at a time, throughout the day; until but a few were wanting to make the number complete. Campbell was now anxious to put an end to this fasting of the old chief, and again declared that he was perfectly satisfied. Arapooish demanded what number of skins were yet wanting. On being told, he whispered to some of his people, who disappeared. After a time the number were brought in, though it was evident they were not any of the skins that had been stolen, but others gleaned in the village.

"Is all right now?" demanded Arapooish.

"All is right," replied Campbell.

"Good! Now bring me meat and drink!"

When they were alone together, Arapooish had a conversation with his guest.

"When you come another time among the Crows," said he, "don't hide your goods: trust to them and they will not wrong you. Put your goods in the lodge of a chief, and they are sacred; hide them in a cache, and any one who finds will steal them. My people have now given up your goods for my sake; but there are some foolish young men in the village, who may be disposed to be troublesome. Don't linger, therefore, but pack your horses and be off."

Campbell took his advice, and made his way safely out of the Crow country. He has ever since maintained, that the Crows are not so black as they are painted.

"Trust to their honor," says he, "and you are safe: trust to their honesty, and they will steal the hair off of your head."

Having given these few preliminary particulars, we will resume the course of our narrative.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DEPARTURE FROM GREEN RIVER VALLEY.—POPO AGIE—ITS COURSE—THE RIVERS INTO WHICH IT RUNS.—SCENERY OF THE BLUFFS.—THE GREAT TAR SPRING.—VOLCANIC TRACTS IN THE CROW COUNTRY.—BURNING MOUNTAIN OF POWDER RIVER.—SULPHUR SPRINGS.—HIDDEN FIRES.—COLTER'S HELL.—WIND RIVER.—CAMPBELL'S PARTY.—FITZPATRICK AND HIS TRAPPERS.—CAPTAIN STEWART, AN AMATEUR TRAVELLER.—NATHANIEL WYETH—ANECDOTES OF HIS EXPEDITION TO THE FAR WEST.—DISASTER OF CAMPBELL'S PARTY.—A UNION OF BANDS.—THE BAD PASS.—THE RAPIDS.—DEPARTURE OF FITZPATRICK.—EMBARKATION OF PELTRIES.—WYETH AND HIS BULL BOAT.—ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE IN THE BIGHORN MOUNTAINS.—ADVENTURES IN THE PLAIN.—TRACES OF INDIANS.—TRAVELLING PRECAUTIONS.—DANGERS OF MAKING A SMOKE.—THE RENDEZVOUS.

N the 25th of July, Captain Bonneville struck his tents, and set out on his route for the Bighorn, at the head of a party of fifty-six men, including those who were to embark with Cerré. Crossing the Green River Valley, he proceeded along the south point of the Wind River range of mountains, and soon fell upon the track of Mr. Robert Campbell's party, which had preceded him by a day. This he pursued, until he perceived that it led down the banks of the Sweet Water to the southeast. As this was different from his proposed direction, he left it; and turning to the northeast,

soon came upon the waters of the Popo Agie. This stream takes its rise in the Wind River Mountains. Its name, like most Indian names, is characteristic. *Popo*, in the Crow language, signifying head; and *Agie*, river. It is the head of a long river, extending from the south end of the Wind River Mountains in a northeast direction, until it falls into the Yellowstone. Its course is generally through plains, but is twice crossed by chains of mountains; the first called the Littlehorn, the second, the Bighorn. After it has forced its way through the first chain, it is called the Horn River; after the second chain, it is called the Bighorn River. Its passage through this last chain is rough and violent; making repeated falls, and rushing down long and furious rapids, which threatened destruction to the navigator; though a hardy trapper is said to have shot down them in a canoe. At the foot of these rapids, is the head of navigation; where it was the intention of the parties to construct boats, and embark.

Proceeding down along the Popo Agie, Captain Bonneville came again in full view of the "Bluffs," as they are called, extending from the base of the Wind River Mountains far away to the east, and presenting to the eye a confusion of hills and cliffs of red sandstone, some peaked and angular, some round, some broken into crags and precipices, and piled up in fantastic masses; but all naked and sterile. There appeared to be no soil favorable to vegetation, nothing but coarse gravel; yet, over

all this isolated, barren landscape, were diffused such atmospherical tints and hues, as to blend the whole into harmony and beauty.

In this neighborhood, the captain made search for the "Great Tar Spring," one of the wonders of the mountains; the medicinal properties of which, he had heard extravagantly lauded by the trappers. After a toilsome search, he found it at the foot of a sand-bluff, a little to the east of the Wind River Mountains; where it exuded in a small stream of the color and consistency of tar. The men immediately hastened to collect a quantity of it to use as an ointment for the galled backs of their horses, and as a balsam for their own pains and aches. From the description given of it, it is evidently the bituminous oil, called petroleum or naphtha, which forms a principal ingredient in the potent medicine called British Oil. It is found in various parts of Europe and Asia, in several of the West India islands, and in some places of the United States. In the State of New York, it is called Seneca Oil, from being found near the Seneca Lake.

The Crow country has other natural curiosities, which are held in superstitious awe by the Indians, and considered great marvels by the trappers. Such is the burning mountain, on Powder River, abounding with anthracite coal. Here the earth is hot and cracked; in many places emitting smoke and sulphurous vapors, as if covering concealed fires. A volcanic tract of similar character is found on Stinking River, one of the tribu-

taries of the Bighorn, which takes its unhappy name from the odor derived from sulphurous springs and streams. This last mentioned place was first discovered by Colter, a hunter belonging to Lewis and Clarke's exploring party, who came upon it in the course of his lonely wanderings, and gave such an account of its gloomy terrors, its hidden fires, smoking pits, noxious streams, and the all-pervading "smell of brimstone," that it received, and has ever since retained among trappers, the name of "Colter's Hell!"

Resuming his descent along the left bank of the Popo Agie Captain Bonneville soon reached the plains; where he found several large streams entering from the west. Among these was Wind River, which gives its name to the mountains among which it takes its rise. This is one of the most important streams of the Crow country. The river being much swollen, Captain Bonneville halted at its mouth, and sent out scouts to look for a fording place. While thus encamped, he beheld in the course of the afternoon, a long line of horsemen descending the slope of the hills on the opposite side of the Popo Agie. His first idea was, that they were Indians; he soon discovered, however, that they were white men, and, by the long line of pack-horses, ascertained them to be the convoy of Campbell, which, having descended the Sweet Water, was now on its way to the Horn River.

The two parties came together two or three days afterwards, on the 4th of August, after having passed through

the gap of the Littlehorn Mountain. In company with Campbell's convoy, was a trapping party of the Rocky Mountain Company, headed by Fitzpatrick; who, after Campbell's embarkation on the Bighorn, was to take charge of all the horses, and proceed on a trapping campaign. There were, moreover, two chance companions in the rival camp. One was Captain Stewart of the British army, a gentleman of noble connections, who was amusing himself by a wandering tour in the Far West; in the course of which, he had lived in hunter's style; accompanying various bands of traders, trappers, and Indians; and manifesting that relish for the wilderness that belongs to men of game spirit.

The other casual inmate of Mr. Campbell's camp was Mr. Nathaniel Wyeth; the self-same leader of the band of New England salmon fishers, with whom we parted company in the valley of Pierre's Hole, after the battle with the Blackfeet. A few days after that affair, he again set out from the rendezvous in company with Milton Sublette and his brigade of trappers. On his march, he visited the battle ground, and penetrated to the deserted fort of the Blackfeet in the midst of the wood. It was a dismal scene. The fort was strewed with the mouldering bodies of the slain; while vultures soared aloft, or sat brooding on the trees around; and Indian dogs howled about the place, as if bewailing the death of their masters. Wyeth travelled for a considerable distance to the southwest, in company with Milton Sublette,

when they separated; and the former, with eleven men, the remnant of his band, pushed on for Snake River; kept down the course of that eventful stream; traversed the Blue Mountains, trapping beaver occasionally by the way, and finally, after hardships of all kinds, arrived, on the 29th of October, at Vancouver, on the Columbia, the main factory of the Hudson's Bay Company.

He experienced hospitable treatment at the hands of the agents of that company; but his men, heartily tired of wandering in the wilderness, or tempted by other prospects, refused, for the most part, to continue any longer in his service. Some set off for the Sandwich Islands; some entered into other employ. Wyeth found, too, that a great part of the goods he had brought with him were unfitted for the Indian trade; in a word, his expedition, undertaken entirely on his own resources, proved a failure. He lost everything invested in it, but his hopes. These were as strong as ever. He took note of everything, therefore, that could be of service to him in the further prosecution of his project; collected all the information within his reach, and then set off, accompanied by merely two men, on his return journey across the continent. He had got thus far "by hook and by crook," a mode in which a New England man can make his way all over the world, and through all kinds of difficulties, and was now bound for Boston; in full confidence of being able to form a company for the salmon fishery and fur trade of the Columbia.

The party of Mr. Campbell had met with a disaster in the course of their route from the Sweet Water. Three or four of the men, who were reconnoitring the country in the advance of the main body, were visited one night in their camp, by fifteen or twenty Shoshonies. Considering this tribe as perfectly friendly, they received them in the most cordial and confiding manner. In the course of the night, the man on guard near the horses fell sound asleep; upon which a Shoshonie shot him in the head, and nearly killed him. The savages then made off with the horses, leaving the rest of the party to find their way to the main body on foot.

The rival companies of Captain Bonneville and Mr. Campbell, thus fortuitously brought together, now prosecuted their journey in great good fellowship; forming a joint camp of about a hundred men. The captain, however, began to entertain doubts that Fitzpatrick and his trappers, who kept profound silence as to their future movements, intended to hunt the same grounds which he had selected for his autumnal campaign; which lay to the west of the Horn River, on its tributary streams. In the course of his march, therefore, he secretly detached a small party of trappers, to make their way to those hunting grounds, while he continued on with the main body; appointing a rendezvous, at the next full moon, about the 28th of August, at a place called the Medicine Lodge.

On reaching the second chain, called the Bighorn

Mountains, where the river forced its impetuous way through a precipitous defile, with cascades and rapids, the travellers were obliged to leave its banks, and traverse the mountains by a rugged and frightful route, emphatically called the "Bad Pass." Descending the opposite side, they again made for the river banks; and about the middle of August, reached the point below the rapids, where the river becomes navigable for boats. Here Captain Bonneville detached a second party of trappers, consisting of ten men, to seek and join those whom he had detached while on the route, appointing for them the same rendezvous, (at the Medicine Lodge,) on the 28th of August.

All hands now set to work to construct "bull boats," as they are technically called; a light, fragile kind of bark, characteristic of the expedients and inventions of the wilderness; being formed of buffalo skins, stretched on frames. They are sometimes, also, called skin boats. Wyeth was the first ready; and, with his usual promptness and hardihood, launched his frail bark, singly, on this wild and hazardous voyage, down an almost interminable succession of rivers, winding through countries teeming with savage hordes. Milton Sublette, his former fellow traveller, and his companion in the battle scenes of Pierre's Hole, took passage in his boat. His crew consisted of two white men, and two Indians. We shall hear further of Wyeth, and his wild voyage, in the course of our wanderings about the Far West.

The remaining parties soon completed their several armaments. That of Captain Bonneville was composed of three bull boats, in which he embarked all his peltries, giving them in charge of Mr. Cerré, with a party of thirty-six men. Mr. Campbell took command of his own boats, and the little squadrons were soon gliding down the bright current of the Bighorn.

The secret precautions which Captain Bonneville had taken, to throw his men first into the trapping ground west of the Bighorn, were, probably, superfluous. It did not appear that Fitzpatrick had intended to hunt in that direction. The moment Mr. Campbell and his men embarked with the peltries, Fitzpatrick took charge of all the horses, amounting to above a hundred, and struck off to the east, to trap upon Littlehorn, Powder, and Tongue rivers. He was accompanied by Captain Stewart, who was desirous of having a range about the Crow country. Of the adventures they met with in that region of vagabonds and horse stealers, we shall have something to relate hereafter.

Captain Bonneville being now left to prosecute his trapping campaign without rivalry, set out, on the 17th of August, for the rendezvous at Medicine Lodge. He had but four men remaining with him, and forty-six horses to take care of; with these he had to make his way over mountain and plain, through a marauding, horse-stealing region, full of peril for a numerous cavalcade so slightly manned. He addressed himself to

his difficult journey, however, with his usual alacrity of spirit.

In the afternoon of his first day's journey, on drawing near to the Bighorn Mountain, on the summit of which he intended to encamp for the night, he observed, to his disquiet, a cloud of smoke rising from its base. He came to a halt, and watched it anxiously. It was very irregular; sometimes it would almost die away; and then would mount up in heavy volumes. There was, apparently, a large party encamped there; probably, some ruffian horde of Blackfeet. At any rate, it would not do for so small a number of men, with so numerous a cavalcade, to venture within sight of any wandering tribe. Captain Bonneville and his companions, therefore, avoided this dangerous neighborhood, and, proceeding with extreme caution, reached the summit of the mountain, apparently without being discovered. Here they found a deserted Blackfoot fort, in which they ensconced themselves; disposed of everything as securely as possible, and passed the night without molestation. Early the next morning they descended the south side of the mountain into the great plain extending between it and the Littlehorn range. Here they soon came upon numerous footprints, and the carcasses of buffaloes; by which they knew there must be Indians not far off. Captain Bonneville now began to feel solicitude about the two small parties of trappers which he had detached; lest the Indians should have come upon them before

they had united their forces. But he felt still more solicitude about his own party; for it was hardly to be expected he could traverse these naked plains undiscovered, when Indians were abroad; and should he be discovered, his chance would be a desperate one. Everything now depended upon the greatest circumspection. It was dangerous to discharge a gun, or light a fire, or make the least noise, where such quick-eared and quick-sighted enemies were at hand. In the course of the day they saw indubitable signs that the buffalo had been roaming there in great numbers, and had recently been frightened away. That night they encamped with the greatest care; and threw up a strong breastwork for their protection.

For the two succeeding days they pressed forward rapidly, but cautiously, across the great plain; fording the tributary streams of the Horn River; encamping one night among thickets; the next, on an island; meeting, repeatedly, with traces of Indians; and now and then, in passing through a defile, experiencing alarms that induced them to cock their rifles.

On the last day of their march hunger got the better of their caution, and they shot a fine buffalo bull at the risk of being betrayed by the report. They did not halt to make a meal, but carried the meat on with them to the place of rendezvous, the Medicine Lodge, where they arrived safely, in the evening, and celebrated their arrival by a hearty supper.

The next morning they erected a strong pen for the horses, and a fortress of logs for themselves; and continued to observe the greatest caution. Their cooking was all done at midday when the fire makes no glare, and a moderate smoke cannot be perceived at any great distance. In the morning and the evening, when the wind is lulled, the smoke rises perpendicularly in a blue column, or floats in light clouds above the tree-tops, and can be discovered from afar.

In this way the little party remained for several days, cautiously encamped, until, on the 29th of August, the two detachments they had been expecting, arrived together at the rendezvous. They, as usual, had their several tales of adventures to relate to the captain, which we will furnish to the reader in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ADVENTURES OF THE PARTY OF TEN.—THE BALAAMITE MULE.—A DEAD POINT.—THE MYSTERIOUS ELKS.—A NIGHT ATTACK.—A RETREAT.—TRAVELLING UNDER AN ALARM.—A JOYFUL MEETING.—ADVENTURES OF THE OTHER PARTY.—A DECOY ELK.—RETREAT TO AN ISLAND.—A SAVAGE DANCE OF TRIUMPH.—ARRIVAL AT WIND RIVER.

THE adventures of the detachment of ten are the first in order. These trappers, when they separated from Captain Bonneville at the place where the furs were embarked, proceeded to the foot of the Bighorn Mountain, and having encamped, one of them mounted his mule and went out to set his trap in a neighboring stream. He had not proceeded far when his steed came to a full stop. The trapper kicked and cudgelled, but to every blow and kick the mule snorted and kicked up, but still refused to budge an inch. The rider now cast his eyes warily around in search of some cause for this demur, when, to his dismay, he discovered an Indian fort within gunshot distance, lowering through the twilight. In a twinkling he wheeled about; his mule now seemed as eager to get on as himself, and in a few moments brought him, clattering with his traps, among his comrades. He was jeered at for his alacrity in re-

treating; his report was treated as a false alarm; his brother trappers contented themselves with reconnoitring the fort at a distance, and pronounced that it was deserted. As night set in, the usual precaution, enjoined by Captain Bonneville on his men, was observed. The horses were brought in and tied, and a guard stationed over them. This done, the men wrapped themselves in their blankets, stretched themselves before the fire, and being fatigued with a long day's march, and gorged with a hearty supper, were soon in a profound sleep.

The camp fires gradually died away; all was dark and silent; the sentinel stationed to watch the horses had marched as far, and supped as heartily as any of his companions, and while they snored, he began to nod at his post. After a time, a low trampling noise reached his ear. He half opened his closing eyes, and beheld two or three elks moving about the lodges, picking, and smelling, and grazing here and there. The sight of elk within the purlieus of the camp caused some little surprise; but, having had his supper, he cared not for elk meat, and, suffering them to graze about unmolested, soon relapsed into a doze.

Suddenly, before daybreak, a discharge of fire-arms, and a struggle and tramp of horses, made every one start to his feet. The first move was to secure the horses. Some were gone; others were struggling, and kicking, and trembling, for there was a horrible uproar of whoops, and yells, and fire-arms. Several trappers stole quietly

from the camp, and succeeded in driving in the horses which had broken away; the rest were tethered still more strongly. A breastwork was thrown up of saddles, baggage, and camp furniture, and all hands waited anxiously for daylight. The Indians, in the meantime, collected on a neighboring height, kept up the most horrible clamor, in hopes of striking a panic into the camp, or frightening off the horses. When the day dawned, the trappers attacked them briskly and drove them to some distance. A desultory firing was kept up for an hour, when the Indians, seeing nothing was to be gained, gave up the contest and retired. They proved to be a war party of Blackfeet, who, while in search of the Crow tribe, had fallen upon the trail of Captain Bonneville on the Popo Agie, and dogged him to the Bighorn; but had been completely baffled by his vigilance. They had then waylaid the present detachment, and were actually housed in perfect silence within their fort, when the mule of the trapper made such a dead point.

The savages went off uttering the wildest denunciations of hostility, mingled with opprobrious terms in broken English, and gesticulations of the most insulting kind.

In this mêlée, one white man was wounded, and two horses were killed. On preparing the morning's meal, however, a number of cups, knives, and other articles were missing, which had, doubtless, been carried off by the fictitious elk, during the slumber of the very sagacious sentinel.

As the Indians had gone off in the direction which the trappers had intended to travel, the latter changed their route, and pushed forward rapidly through the "Bad Pass," nor halted until night; when, supposing themselves out of the reach of the enemy, they contented themselves with tying up their horses and posting a guard. They had scarce laid down to sleep, when a dog strayed into the camp with a small pack of moccasins tied upon his back; for dogs are made to carry burdens among the Indians. The sentinel, more knowing than he of the preceding night, awoke his companions and reported the circumstance. It was evident that Indians were at hand. All were instantly at work; a strong pen was soon constructed for the horses, after completing which, they resumed their slumbers with the composure of men long inured to danger.

In the next night, the prowling of dogs about the camp, and various suspicious noises, showed that Indians were still hovering about them. Hurrying on by long marches, they at length fell upon a trail, which, with the experienced eye of a veteran woodman, they soon discovered to be that of the party of trappers detached by Captain Bonneville when on his march, and which they were sent to join. They likewise ascertained from various signs, that this party had suffered some maltreatment from the Indians. They now pursued the trail with intense anxiety; it carried them to the banks of the stream called the Gray Bull, and down along its course,

until they came to where it empties into the Horn River. Here, to their great joy, they discovered the comrades of whom they were in search, all strongly fortified, and in a state of great watchfulness and anxiety.

We now take up the adventures of this first detachment of trappers. These men, after parting with the main body under Captain Bonneville, had proceeded slowly for several days up the course of the river, trapping beaver as they went. One morning, as they were about to visit their traps, one of the camp-keepers pointed to a fine elk, grazing at a distance, and requested them to shoot it. Three of the trappers started off for the purpose. In passing a thicket, they were fired upon by some savages in ambush, and at the same time, the pretended elk, throwing off his hide and his horn, started forth an Indian warrior.

One of the three trappers, had been brought down by the volley; the others fled to the camp, and all hands, seizing up whatever they could carry off, retreated to a small island in the river, and took refuge among the willows. Here they were soon joined by their comrade who had fallen, but who had merely been wounded in the neck.

In the meantime, the Indians took possession of the deserted camp, with all the traps, accoutrements, and horses. While they were busy among the spoils, a solitary trapper, who had been absent at his work, came sauntering to the camp with his traps on his back. He

had approached near by, when an Indian came forward and motioned him to keep away; at the same moment, he was perceived by his comrades on the island, and warned of his danger with loud cries. The poor fellow stood for a moment, bewildered and aghast, then dropping his traps, wheeled and made off at full speed, quickened by a sportive volley which the Indians rattled after him.

In high good humor with their easy triumph, the savages now formed a circle round the fire and performed a war dance, with the unlucky trappers for rueful spectators. This done, emboldened by what they considered cowardice on the part of the white men, they neglected their usual mode of bush-fighting, and advanced openly within twenty paces of the willows. A sharp volley from the trappers brought them to a sudden halt, and laid three of them breathless. The chief, who had stationed himself on an eminence to direct all the movements of his people, seeing three of his warriors laid low, ordered the rest to retire. They immediately did so, and the whole band soon disappeared behind a point of woods, carrying off with them the horses, traps, and the greater part of the baggage.

It was just after this misfortune, that the party of ten men discovered this forlorn band of trappers in a fortress, which they had thrown up after their disaster. They were so perfectly dismayed, that they could not be induced even to go in quest of their traps, which they had set in a neighboring stream. The two parties now

joined their forces, and made their way, without further misfortune, to the rendezvous.

Captain Bonneville perceived from the reports of these parties, as well as from what he had observed himself in his recent march, that he was in a neighborhood teeming with danger. Two wandering Snake Indians, also, who visited the camp, assured him that there were two large bands of Crows marching rapidly upon him. He broke up his encampment, therefore, on the 1st of September, made his way to the south, across the Littlehorn Mountain, until he reached Wind River, and then turning westward, moved slowly up the banks of that stream, giving time for his men to trap as he proceeded. As it was not in the plan of the present hunting campaign to go near the caches on Green River, and as the trappers were in want of traps to replace those they had lost, Captain Bonneville undertook to visit the caches, and procure a supply. To accompany him in this hazardous expedition, which would take him through the defiles of the Wind River Mountains, and up the Green River Valley, he took but three men; the main party were to continue on trapping up towards the head of Wind River, near which he was to rejoin them, just about the place where that stream issues from the mountains. We shall accompany the captain on his adventurous errand.

CHAPTER XXV.

CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE SETS OUT FOR GREEN RIVER VALLEY. JOURNEY UP THE POPO AGIE.—BUFFALOES.—THE STARING WHITE BEARS.—THE SMOKE.—THE WARM SPRINGS.—ATTEMPT TO TRAVERSE THE WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS.—THE GREAT SLOPE.—MOUNTAIN DELLS AND CHASMS.—CRYSTAL LAKES.—ASCENT OF A SNOWY PEAK.—SUBLIME PROSPECT.—A PANORAMA.—"LES DIGNES DE PITIE," OR WILD MEN OF THE MOUNTAINS.

HAVING forded Wind River a little above its mouth, Captain Bonneville and his three companions proceeded across a gravelly plain, until they fell upon the Popo Agie, up the left bank of which they held their course, nearly in a southerly direction. Here they came upon numerous droves of buffalo, and halted for the purpose of procuring a supply of beef. As the hunters were stealing cautiously to get within shot of the game, two small white bears suddenly presented themselves in their path, and, rising upon their hind legs, contemplated them for some time, with a whimsically solemn gaze. The hunters remained motionless; whereupon the bears, having apparently satisfied their curiosity, lowered themselves upon all fours, and began to withdraw. The hunters now advanced, upon which the bears turned, rose again upon their haunches.

and repeated their serio-comic examination. This was repeated several times, until the hunters, piqued at their unmannerly staring, rebuked it with a discharge of their rifles. The bears made an awkward bound or two, as if wounded, and then walked off with great gravity, seeming to commune together, and every now and then turning to take another look at the hunters. It was well for the latter that the bears were but half grown, and had not yet acquired the ferocity of their kind.

The buffalo were somewhat startled at the report of the fire-arms; but the hunters succeeded in killing a couple of fine cows, and, having secured the best of the meat, continued forward until some time after dark, when, encamping in a large thicket of willows, they made a great fire, roasted buffalo beef enough for half a score, disposed of the whole of it with keen relish and high glee, and then "turned in" for the night and slept soundly, like weary and well fed hunters.

At daylight they were in the saddle again, and skirted along the river, passing through fresh grassy meadows, and a succession of beautiful groves of willows and cotton-wood. Towards evening, Captain Bonneville observed a smoke at a distance rising from among hills, directly in the route he was pursuing. Apprehensive of some hostile band, he concealed the horses in a thicket, and, accompanied by one of his men, crawled cautiously up a height, from which he could overlook the scene of danger. Here, with a spy-glass, he reconnoitred the surrounding

country, but not a lodge nor fire, not a man, horse, nor dog, was to be discovered; in short, the smoke which had caused such alarm proved to be the vapor from several warm, or rather hot springs of considerable magnitude, pouring forth streams in every direction over a bottom of white clay. One of the springs was about twenty-five yards in diameter, and so deep, that the water was of a bright green color.

They were now advancing diagonally upon the chain of Wind River Mountains, which lay between them and Green River Valley. To coast round their southern points would be a wide circuit; whereas, could they force their way through them, they might proceed in a straight line. The mountains were lofty, with snowy peaks and cragged sides; it was hoped, however, that some practicable defile might be found. They attempted, accordingly, to penetrate the mountains by following up one of the branches of the Popo Agie, but soon found themselves in the midst of stupendous crags and precipices, that barred all progress. Retracing their steps, and falling back upon the river, they consulted where to make another attempt. They were too close beneath the mountains to scan them generally, but they now recollected having noticed, from the plain, a beautiful slope, rising, at an angle of about thirty degrees, and apparently without any break, until it reached the snowy region. Seeking this gentle acclivity, they began to ascend it with alacrity, trusting to find at the top one of

those elevated plains which prevail among the Rocky Mountains. The slope was covered with coarse gravel, interspersed with plates of freestone. They attained the summit with some toil, but found, instead of a level, or rather undulating plain, that they were on the brink of a deep and precipitous ravine, from the bottom of which rose a second slope, similar to the one they had just ascended. Down into this profound ravine they made their way by a rugged path, or rather fissure of the rocks, and then labored up the second slope. They gained the summit only to find themselves on another ravine, and now perceived that this vast mountain, which had presented such a sloping and even side to the distant beholder on the plain, was shagged by frightful precipices, and seamed with longitudinal chasms, deep and dangerous.

In one of these wild dells they passed the night, and slept soundly and sweetly after their fatigues. Two days more of arduous climbing and scrambling only served to admit them into the heart of this mountainous and awful solitude; where difficulties increased as they proceeded. Sometimes they scrambled from rock to rock, up the bed of some mountain stream, dashing its bright way down to the plains; sometimes they availed themselves of the paths made by the deer and the mountain sheep, which, however, often took them to the brink of fearful precipices, or led to rugged defiles, impassable for their horses. At one place, they were obliged to slide their

horses down the face of a rock, in which attempt some of the poor animals lost their footing, rolled to the bottom, and came near being dashed to pieces.

In the afternoon of the second day, the travellers attained one of the elevated valleys locked up in this singular bed of mountains. Here were two bright and beautiful little lakes, set like mirrors in the midst of stern and rocky heights, and surrounded by grassy meadows, inexpressibly refreshing to the eye. These probably were among the sources of those mighty streams which take their rise among these mountains, and wander hundreds of miles through the plains.

In the green pastures bordering upon these lakes, the travellers halted to repose, and to give their weary horses time to crop the sweet and tender herbage. They had now ascended to a great height above the level of the plains, yet they beheld huge crags of granite piled one upon another, and beetling like battlements far above them. While two of the men remained in the camp with the horses, Captain Bonneville, accompanied by the other men, set out to climb a neighboring height, hoping to gain a commanding prospect, and discern some practicable route through this stupendous labyrinth. After much toil, he reached the summit of a lofty cliff, but it was only to behold gigantic peaks rising all around, and towering far into the snowy regions of the atmosphere. Selecting one which appeared to be the highest, he crossed a narrow intervening valley, and

began to scale it. He soon found that he had undertaken a tremendous task; but the pride of man is never more obstinate than when climbing mountains. The ascent was so steep and rugged that he and his companions were frequently obliged to clamber on hands and knees, with their guns slung upon their backs. Frequently, exhausted with fatigue, and dripping with perspiration, they threw themselves upon the snow, and took handfuls of it to allay their parching thirst. At one place, they even stripped off their coats and hung them upon the bushes, and thus lightly clad, proceeded to scramble over these eternal snows. As they ascended still higher, there were cool breezes that refreshed and braced them, and springing with new ardor to their task, they at length attained the summit.

Here a scene burst upon the view of Captain Bonneville, that for a time astonished and overwhelmed him with its immensity. He stood, in fact, upon that dividing ridge which Indians regard as the crest of the world; and on each side of which, the landscape may be said to decline to the two cardinal oceans of the globe. Whichever way he turned his eye, it was confounded by the vastness and variety of objects. Beneath him, the Rocky Mountains seemed to open all their secret recesses: deep, solemn valleys; treasured lakes; dreary passes; rugged defiles, and foaming torrents; while beyond their savage precincts, the eye was lost in an almost immeasurable landscape; stretching on every side into dim and

hazy distance, like the expanse of a summer's sea. Whichever way he looked, he beheld vast plains glimmering with reflected sunshine; mighty streams wandering on their shining course toward either ocean, and snowy mountains, chain beyond chain, and peak beyond peak, till they melted like clouds into the horizon. For a time, the Indian fable seemed realized: he had attained that height from which the Blackfoot warrior after death, first catches a view of the land of souls, and beholds the happy hunting grounds spread out below him, brightening with the abodes of the free and generous spirits. The captain stood for a long while gazing upon this scene, lost in a crowd of vague and indefinite ideas and sensations. A long-drawn inspiration at length relieved him from this enthrallment of the mind, and he began to analyze the parts of this vast panorama. A simple enumeration of a few of its features, may give some idea of its collective grandeur and magnificence.

The peak on which the captain had taken his stand, commanded the whole Wind River chain; which, in fact, may rather be considered one immense mountain, broken into snowy peaks and lateral spurs, and seamed with narrow valleys. Some of these valleys glittered with silver lakes and gushing streams; the fountain heads, as it were, of the mighty tributaries to the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Beyond the snowy peaks, to the south, and far, far below the mountain range, the gentle river, called the Sweet Water, was seen pursuing its tranquil way

through the rugged regions of the Black Hills. In the east, the head waters of Wind River wandered through a plain, until, mingling in one powerful current, they forced their way through the range of Horn Mountains, and were lost to view. To the north, were caught glimpses of the upper streams of the Yellowstone, that great tributary of the Missouri. In another direction were to be seen some of the sources of the Oregon, or Columbia flowing to the northwest, past those towering landmarks the three Tetons, and pouring down into the great lava plain; while, almost at the captain's feet, the Green River, or Colorado of the West, set forth on its wandering pilgrimage to the Gulf of California; at first a mere mountain torrent, dashing northward over crag and precipice, in a succession of cascades, and tumbling into the plain, where, expanding into an ample river, it circled away to the south, and after alternately shining out and disappearing in the mazes of the vast landscape, was finally lost in a horizon of mountains. The day was calm and cloudless, and the atmosphere so pure that objects were discernible at an astonishing distance. The whole of this immense area was inclosed by an outer range of shadowy peaks, some of them faintly marked on the horizon, which seemed to wall it in from the rest of the earth.

It is to be regretted that Captain Bonneville had no instruments with him with which to ascertain the altitude of this peak. He gives it as his opinion, that it is

the loftiest point of the North American continent; but of this we have no satisfactory proof. It is certain that the Rocky Mountains are of an altitude vastly superior to what was formerly supposed. We rather incline to the opinion that the highest peak is further to the northward, and is the same measured by Mr. Thompson, surveyor to the Northwest Company; who, by the joint means of the barometer and trigonometric measurement, ascertained it to be twenty-five thousand feet above the level of the sea; an elevation only inferior to that of the Himalayas.*

For a long time, Captain Bonneville remained gazing around him with wonder and enthusiasm; at length the chill and wintry winds, whirling about the snow-clad height, admonished him to descend. He soon regained the spot where he and his companions had thrown off their coats, which were now gladly resumed, and, retracing their course down the peak, they safely rejoined their companions on the border of the lake.

Notwithstanding the savage and almost inaccessible nature of these mountains, they have their inhabitants. As one of the party was out hunting, he came upon the solitary track of a man, in a lonely valley. Following it up, he reached the brow of a cliff, whence he beheld three savages running across the valley below him. He fired his gun to call their attention, hoping to induce

* See the letter of Professor Renwick, in the Appendix to Astoria.

them to turn back. They only fled the faster, and disappeared among the rocks. The hunter returned and reported what he had seen. Captain Bonneville at once concluded that these belonged to a kind of hermit race, scanty in number, that inhabit the highest and most inaccessible fastnesses. They speak the Shoshonie language, and probably are offsets from that tribe, though they have peculiarities of their own, which distinguish them from all other Indians. They are miserably poor; own no horses, and are destitute of every convenience to be derived from an intercourse with the whites. Their weapons are bows and stone-pointed arrows, with which they hunt the deer, the elk, and the mountain sheep. They are to be found scattered about the countries of the Shoshonie, Flathead, Crow, and Blackfeet tribes; but their residences are always in lonely places, and the clefts of the rocks.

Their footsteps are often seen by the trappers in the high and solitary valleys among the mountains, and the smokes of their fires descried among the precipices, but they themselves are rarely met with and still more rarely brought to a parley, so great is their shyness, and their dread of strangers.

As their poverty offers no temptation to the marauder, and as they are inoffensive in their habits, they are never the objects of warfare: should one of them, however, fall into the hands of a war party, he is sure to be made a sacrifice, for the sake of that savage trophy, a scalp, and

that barbarous ceremony, a scalp dance. Those forlorn beings, forming a mere link between human nature and the brute, have been looked down upon with pity and contempt by the creole trappers, who have given them the appellation of "les dignes de pitie," or "the objects of pity." They appear more worthy to be called the wild men of the mountains.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A RETROGRADE MOVE.—CHANNEL OF A MOUNTAIN TORRENT. — ALPINE SCENERY. — CASCADES.—BEAVER VALLEYS.—BEAVERS AT WORK—THEIR ARCHITECTURE—THEIR MODES OF FELLING TREES.—MODE OF TRAPPING BEAVER. —CONTESTS OF SKILL.—A BEAVER "UP TO TRAP."—ARRIVAL AT THE GREEN RIVER CACHES.

THE view from the snowy peak of the Wind River Mountain, while it had excited Captain Bonneville's enthusiasm, had satisfied him that it would be useless to force a passage westward, through multiplying barriers of cliffs and precipices. Turning his face eastward, therefore, he endeavored to regain the plains, intending to make the circuit round the southern point of the mountain. To descend, and to extricate himself from the heart of this rock-piled wilderness, was almost as difficult as to penetrate it. Taking his course down the ravine of a tumbling stream, the commencement of some future river, he descended from rock to rock, and shelf to shelf, between stupendous cliffs and beetling crags, that sprang up to the sky. Often he had to cross and recross the rushing torrent, as it wound foaming and roaring down its broken channel, or was walled by perpendicular precipices; and imminent was

the hazard of breaking the legs of the horses in the clefts and fissures of slippery rocks. The whole scenery of this deep ravine was of Alpine wildness and sublimity. Sometimes the travellers passed beneath cascades which pitched from such lofty heights, that the water fell into the stream like heavy rain. In other places, torrents came tumbling from crag to crag, dashing into foam and spray, and making tremendous din and uproar.

On the second day of their descent, the travellers, having got beyond the steepest pitch of the mountains, came to where the deep and rugged ravine began occasionally to expand into small levels or valleys, and the stream to assume for short intervals a more peaceful character. Here, not merely the river itself, but every rivulet flowing into it, was dammed up by communities of industrious beavers, so as to inundate the neighborhood, and make continual swamps.

During a midday halt in one of these beaver valleys, Captain Bonneville left his companions, and strolled down the course of the stream to reconnoitre. He had not proceeded far, when he came to a beaver pond, and caught a glimpse of one of its painstaking inhabitants busily at work upon the dam. The curiosity of the captain was aroused, to behold the mode of operating of this far-famed architect: he moved forward, therefore, with the utmost caution, parting the branches of the water willows without making any noise, until having attained a position commanding a view of the whole pond, he

stretched himself flat on the ground, and watched the solitary workman. In a little while, three others appeared at the head of the dam, bringing sticks and bushes. With these they proceeded directly to the barrier, which Captain Bonneville perceived was in need of repair. Having deposited their loads upon the broken part, they dived into the water, and shortly reappeared at the surface. Each now brought a quantity of mud, with which he would plaster the sticks and bushes just deposited. This kind of masonry was continued for some time, repeated supplies of wood and mud being brought, and treated in the same manner. This done, the industrious beavers indulged in a little recreation, chasing each other about the pond, dodging and whisking about on the surface, or diving to the bottom; and in their frolic, often slapping their tails on the water with a loud clacking sound. While they were thus amusing themselves, another of the fraternity made his appearance, and looked gravely on their sports for some time, without offering to join in them. He then climbed the bank close to where the captain was concealed, and, rearing himself on his hind quarters, in a sitting position, put his fore paws against a young pine-tree, and began to cut the bark with his teeth. At times he would tear off a small piece, and holding it between his paws, and retaining his sedentary position, would feed himself with it, after the fashion of a monkey. The object of the beaver, however, was evidently to cut down the tree; and he was proceed-

ing with his work, when he was alarmed by the approach of Captain Bonneville's men, who, feeling anxious at the protracted absence of their leader, were coming in search of him. At the sound of their voices, all the beavers, busy as well as idle, dived at once beneath the surface, and were no more to be seen. Captain Bonneville regretted this interruption. He had heard much of the sagacity of the beaver in cutting down trees, in which, it is said, they manage to make them fall into the water, and in such a position and direction as may be most favorable for conveyance to the desired point. In the present instance, the tree was a tall straight pine, and as it grew perpendicularly, and there was not a breath of air stirring, the beaver could have felled it in any direction he pleased, if really capable of exercising a discretion in the matter. He was evidently engaged in "belting" the tree, and his first incision had been on the side nearest to the water.

Captain Bonneville, however, discredits, on the whole, the alleged sagacity of the beaver in this particular, and thinks the animal has no other aim than to get the tree down, without any of the subtle calculation as to its mode or direction of falling. This attribute, he thinks, has been ascribed to them from the circumstance, that most trees growing near water-courses, either lean bodily towards the stream, or stretch their largest limbs in that direction, to benefit by the space, the light, and the air to be found there. The beaver, of course, attacks those

trees which are nearest at hand, and on the banks of the stream or pond. He makes incisions round them, or, in technical phrase, belts them with his teeth, and when they fall, they naturally take the direction in which their trunks or branches preponderate.

"I have often," says Captain Bonneville, "seen trees measuring eighteen inches in diameter, at the places where they had been cut through by the beaver, but they lay in all directions, and often very inconveniently for the after purposes of the animal. In fact, so little ingenuity do they at times display in this particular, that at one of our camps on Snake River, a beaver was found with his head wedged into the cut which he had made, the tree having fallen upon him and held him prisoner until he died."

Great choice, according to the captain, is certainly displayed by the beaver in selecting the wood which is to furnish bark for winter provision. The whole beaver household, old and young, set out upon this business, and will often make long journeys before they are suited. Sometimes they cut down trees of the largest size and then cull the branches, the bark of which is most to their taste. These they cut into lengths of about three feet, convey them to the water, and float them to their lodges, where they are stored away for winter. They are studious of cleanliness and comfort in their lodges, and after their repasts, will carry out the sticks from which they have eaten the bark, and throw them into the current be-

yond the barrier. They are jealous, too, of their territories, and extremely pugnacious, never permitting a strange beaver to enter their premises, and often fighting with such virulence as almost to tear each other to pieces. In the spring, which is the breeding season, the male leaves the female at home, and sets off on a tour of pleasure, rambling often to a great distance, recreating himself in every clear and quiet expanse of water on his way, and climbing the banks occasionally to feast upon the tender sprouts of the young willows. As summer advances, he gives up his bachelor rambles, and bethinking himself of housekeeping duties, returns home to his mate and his new progeny, and marshals them all for the foraging expedition in quest of winter provisions.

After having shown the public spirit of this praiseworthy little animal as a member of a community, and his amiable and exemplary conduct as the father of a family, we grieve to record the perils with which he is environed, and the snares set for him and his painstaking household.

Practice, says Captain Bonneville, has given such a quickness of eye to the experienced trapper in all that relates to his pursuit, that he can detect the slightest sign of beaver, however wild; and although the lodge may be concealed by close thickets and overhanging willows, he can generally, at a single glance, make an accurate guess at the number of its inmates. He now goes to work to set his trap; planting it upon the shore, in some

chosen place, two or three inches below the surface of the water, and secures it by a chain to a pole set deep in the mud. A small twig is then stripped of its bark, and one end is dipped in the "medicine," as the trappers term the peculiar bait which they employ. This end of the stick rises about four inches above the surface of the water, the other end is planted between the jaws of the trap. The beaver, possessing an acute sense of smell, is soon attracted by the odor of the bait. As he raises his nose towards it, his foot is caught in the trap. In his fright he throws a somerset into the deep water. The trap, being fastened to the pole, resists all his efforts to drag it to the shore; the chain by which it is fastened defies his teeth; he struggles for a time, and at length sinks to the bottom and is drowned.

Upon rocky bottoms, where it is not possible to plant the pole, it is thrown into the stream. The beaver, when entrapped, often gets fastened by the chain to sunken logs or floating timber; if he gets to shore, he is entangled in the thickets of brook willows. In such cases, however, it costs the trapper diligent search, and sometimes a bout at swimming, before he finds his game.

Occasionally it happens that several members of a beaver family are trapped in succession. The survivors then become extremely shy, and can scarcely be "brought to medicine," to use the trapper's phrase for "taking the bait." In such case, the trapper gives up the use of the bait, and conceals his traps in the usual paths and cross-

ing-places of the household. The beaver now being completely "up to trap," approaches them cautiously, and springs them ingeniously with a stick. At other times, he turns the traps bottom upwards, by the same means, and occasionally even drags them to the barrier and conceals them in the mud. The trapper now gives up the contest of ingenuity, and shouldering his traps, marches off, admitting that he is not yet "up to beaver."

On the day following Captain Bonneville's supervision of the industrious and frolicsome community of beavers, of which he has given so edifying an account, he succeeded in extricating himself from the Wind River Mountains, and regaining the plain to the eastward, made a great bend to the south, so as to go round the bases of the mountains, and arrived without further incident of importance, at the old place of rendezvous in Green River Valley, on the 17th of September.

He found the caches, in which he had deposited his superfluous goods and equipments, all safe, and having opened and taken from them the necessary supplies, he closed them again; taking care to obliterate all traces that might betray them to the keen eyes of Indian marauders.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ROUTE TOWARDS WIND RIVER.—DANGEROUS NEIGHBORHOOD.—ALARMS AND PRECAUTIONS.—A SHAM ENCAMPMENT.—APPARITION OF AN INDIAN SPY.—MIDNIGHT MOVE.—A MOUNTAIN DEFILE.—THE WIND RIVER VALLEY.—TRACKING A PARTY.—DESERTED CAMPS.—SYMPTOMS OF CROWS.—MEETING OF COMRADES.—A TRAPPER ENTRAPPED.—CROW PLEASANTRY.—CROW SPIES.—A DECAMPMENT.—RETURN TO GREEN RIVER VALLEY.—MEETING WITH FITZPATRICK'S PARTY—THEIR ADVENTURES AMONG THE CROWS.—ORTHODOX CROWS.

ON the 18th of September, Captain Bonneville and his three companions set out, bright and early, to rejoin the main party, from which they had parted on Wind River. Their route lay up the Green River Valley, with that stream on their right hand, and beyond it, the range of Wind River Mountains. At the head of the valley, they were to pass through a defile which would bring them out beyond the northern end of these mountains, to the head of Wind River; where they expected to meet the main party, according to arrangement.

We have already adverted to the dangerous nature of this neighborhood, infested by roving bands of Crows and Blackfeet; to whom the numerous defiles and passes

of the country afford capital places for ambush and surprise. The travellers, therefore, kept a vigilant eye upon everything that might give intimation of lurking danger.

About two hours after midday, as they reached the summit of a hill, they discovered buffalo on the plain below, running in every direction. One of the men, too, fancied he heard the report of a gun. It was concluded, therefore, that there was some party of Indians below, hunting the buffalo.

The horses were immediately concealed in a narrow ravine; and the captain, mounting an eminence, but concealing himself from view, reconnoitred the whole neighborhood with a telescope. Not an Indian was to be seen; so, after halting about an hour, he resumed his journey. Convinced, however, that he was in a dangerous neighborhood, he advanced with the utmost caution; winding his way through hollows and ravines, and avoiding, as much as possible, any open tract, or rising ground, that might betray his little party to the watchful eye of an Indian scout.

Arriving, at length, at the edge of the open meadowland bordering on the river, he again observed the buffalo, as far as he could see, scampering in great alarm. Once more concealing the horses, he and his companions remained for a long time watching the various groups of the animals, as each caught the panic and started off; but they sought in vain to discover the cause.

They were now about to enter the mountain defile, at

the head of Green River Valley, where they might be waylaid and attacked; they, therefore, arranged the packs on their horses, in the manner most secure and convenient for sudden flight, should such be necessary. This done, they again set forward, keeping the most anxious lookout in every direction.

It was now drawing towards evening; but they could not think of encamping for the night, in a place so full of danger. Captain Bonneville, therefore, determined to halt about sunset, kindle a fire, as if for encampment, to cook and eat supper; but, as soon as it was sufficiently dark, to make a rapid move for the summit of the mountain, and seek some secluded spot for their night's lodgings.

Accordingly, as the sun went down, the little party came to a halt, made a large fire, spitted their buffalo meat on wooden sticks, and, when sufficiently roasted, planted the savory viands before them; cutting off huge slices with their hunting knives, and supping with a hunter's appetite. The light of their fire would not fail, as they knew, to attract the attention of any Indian horde in the neighborhood; but they trusted to be off and away, before any prowlers could reach the place. While they were supping thus hastily, however, one of their party suddenly started up, and shouted "Indians!" All were instantly on their feet, with their rifles in their hands; but could see no enemy. The man, however, declared that he had seen an Indian advancing, cau-

tiously, along the trail which they had made in coming to the encampment; who, the moment he was perceived, had thrown himself on the ground, and disappeared. He urged Captain Bonneville instantly to decamp. The captain, however, took the matter more coolly. The single fact, that the Indian had endeavored to hide himself, convinced him that he was not one of a party, on the advance to make an attack. He was, probably, some scout, who had followed up their trail, until he came in sight of their fire. He would, in such case, return, and report what he had seen to his companions. These, supposing the white men had encamped for the night, would keep aloof until very late, when all should be asleep. They would, then, according to Indian tactics, make their stealthy approaches, and place themselves in ambush around, preparatory to their attack, at the usual hour of daylight.

Such was Captain Bonneville's conclusion; in consequence of which, he counselled his men to keep perfectly quiet, and act as if free from all alarm, until the proper time arrived for a move. They, accordingly, continued their repast with pretended appetite and jollity; and then trimmed and replenished their fire, as if for a bivouac. As soon, however, as the night had completely set in, they left their fire blazing; walked quietly among the willows, and then leaping into their saddles, made off as noiselessly as possible. In proportion as they left the point of danger behind them they relaxed in their

rigid and anxious taciturnity, and began to joke at the expense of their enemy; whom they pictured to themselves mousing in the neighborhood of their deserted fire, waiting for the proper time of attack, and preparing for a grand disappointment.

About midnight, feeling satisfied that they had gained a secure distance, they posted one of their number to keep watch, in case the enemy should follow on their trail, and then, turning abruptly into a dense and matted thicket of willows, halted for the night at the foot of the mountain, instead of making for the summit, as they had originally intended.

A trapper in the wilderness, like a sailor on the ocean, snatches morsels of enjoyment in the midst of trouble, and sleeps soundly when surrounded by danger. The little party now made their arrangements for sleep with perfect calmness; they did not venture to make a fire and cook, it is true, though generally done by hunters whenever they come to a halt, and have provisions. They comforted themselves, however, by smoking a tranquil pipe; and then calling in the watch, and turning loose the horses, stretched themselves on their pallets, agreed that whoever should first awake, should rouse the rest, and in a little while were all in as sound sleep as though in the midst of a fortress.

A little before day, they were all on the alert; it was the hour for Indian maraud. A sentinel was immediately detached, to post himself at a little distance on

their trail, and give the alarm, should he see or hear an enemy.

With the first blink of dawn, the rest sought the horses; brought them to the camp, and tied them up, until an hour after sunrise; when, the sentinel having reported that all was well, they sprang once more into their saddles, and pursued the most covert and secret paths up the mountain, avoiding the direct route.

At noon, they halted and made a hasty repast; and then bent their course so as to regain the route from which they had diverged. They were now made sensible of the danger from which they had just escaped. There were tracks of Indians who had evidently been in pursuit of them; but had recently returned, baffled in their search.

Trusting that they had now got a fair start, and could not be overtaken before night, even in case the Indians should renew the chase, they pushed briskly forward, and did not encamp until late; when they cautiously concealed themselves in a secure nook of the mountains.

Without any further alarm, they made their way to the head waters of Wind River, and reached the neighborhood in which they had appointed the rendezvous with their companions. It was within the precincts of the Crow country; the Wind River Valley being one of the favorite haunts of that restless tribe. After much searching, Captain Bonneville came upon a trail which had evidently been made by his main party. It was so old, however, that he feared his people might have left

the neighborhood; driven off, perhaps, by some of those war parties which were on the prowl. He continued his search with great anxiety, and no little fatigue; for his horses were jaded, and almost crippled, by their forced marches and scramblings through rocky defiles.

On the following day, about noon, Captain Bonneville came upon a deserted camp of his people, from which they had, evidently, turned back; but he could find no signs to indicate why they had done so; whether they had met with misfortune, or molestation, or in what direction they had gone. He was now, more than ever, perplexed.

On the following day, he resumed his march with increasing anxiety. The feet of his horses had by this time become so worn and wounded by the rocks, that he had to make moccasins for them of buffalo hide. About noon, he came to another deserted camp of his men; but soon after lost their trail. After great search, he once more found it, turning in a southerly direction along the eastern bases of the Wind River Mountains, which towered to the right. He now pushed forward with all possible speed, in hopes of overtaking the party. At night, he slept at another of their camps, from which they had but recently departed. When the day dawned sufficiently to distinguish objects, he perceived the danger that must be dogging the heels of his main party. All about the camp were traces of Indians, who must have been prowling about it at the time his people had passed the night

there; and who must still be hovering about them. Convinced, now, that the main party could not be at any great distance, he mounted a scout on the best horse, and set him forward to overtake them, to warn them of their danger, and to order them to halt, until he should rejoin them.

In the afternoon, to his great joy, he met the scout returning, with six comrades from the main party, leading fresh horses for his accommodation; and on the following day (September 25th), all hands were once more reunited, after a separation of nearly three weeks. Their meeting was hearty and joyous; for they had both experienced dangers and perplexities.

The main party, in pursuing their course up the Wind River Valley, had been dogged the whole way by a war party of Crows. In one place, they had been fired upon, but without injury; in another place, one of their horses had been cut loose, and carried off. At length, they were so closely beset, that they were obliged to make a retrograde move, lest they should be surprised and overcome. This was the movement which had caused such perplexity to Captain Bonneville.

The whole party now remained encamped for two or three days, to give repose to both men and horses. Some of the trappers, however, pursued their vocations about the neighboring streams. While one of them was setting his traps, he heard the tramp of horses, and looking up, beheld a party of Crow braves moving along at no great distance, with a considerable cavalcade. The trapper

hastened to conceal himself, but was discerned by the quick eye of the savages. With whoops and yells, they dragged him from his hiding-place, flourished over his head their tomahawks and scalping-knives, and for a time, the poor trapper gave himself up for lost. Fortunately, the Crows were in a jocose, rather than a sanguinary mood. They amused themselves heartily, for a while, at the expense of his terrors; and after having played off divers Crow pranks and pleasantries, suffered him to depart unharmed. It is true, they stripped him completely, one taking his horse, another his gun, a third his traps, a fourth his blanket, and so on, through all his accoutrements, and even his clothing, until he was stark naked: but then they generously made him a present of an old tattered buffalo robe, and dismissed him, with many complimentary speeches, and much laughter. When the trapper returned to the camp, in such sorry plight, he was greeted with peals of laughter from his comrades, and seemed more mortified by the style in which he had been dismissed, than rejoiced at escaping with his life. A circumstance which he related to Captain Bonneville, gave some insight into the cause of this extreme jocularity on the part of the Crows. They had evidently had a run of luck, and, like winning gamblers, were in high good humor. Among twenty-six fine horses, and some mules, which composed their cavalcade, the trapper recognized a number which had belonged to Fitzpatrick's brigade, when they parted company on the Bighorn. It

was supposed, therefore, that these vagabonds had been on his trail, and robbed him of part of his cavalry.

On the day following this affair, three Crows came into Captain Bonneville's camp, with the most easy, innocent, if not impudent air imaginable; walking about with that imperturbable coolness and unconcern, in which the Indian rivals the fine gentleman. As they had not been of the set which stripped the trapper, though evidently of the same band, they were not molested. Indeed, Captain Bonneville treated them with his usual kindness and hospitality; permitting them to remain all day in the camp, and even to pass the night there. At the same time, however, he caused a strict watch to be maintained on all their movements; and at night, stationed an armed sentinel near them. The Crows remonstrated against the latter being armed. This only made the captain suspect them to be spies, who meditated treachery; he redoubled, therefore, his precautions. At the same time, he assured his guests, that while they were perfectly welcome to the shelter and comfort of his camp, yet, should any of their tribe venture to approach during the night, they would certainly be shot; which would be a very unfortunate circumstance, and much to be deplored. To the latter remark, they fully assented; and shortly afterward commenced a wild song, or chant, which they kept up for a long time, and in which, they very probably gave their friends, who might be prowling around the camp, notice that the white men were on the

alert. The night passed away without disturbance. In the morning, the three Crow guests were very pressing that Captain Bonneville and his party should accompany them to their camp, which they said was close by. Instead of accepting their invitation, Captain Bonneville took his departure with all possible dispatch, eager to be out of the vicinity of such a piratical horde; nor did he relax the diligence of his march, until, on the second day, he reached the banks of the Sweet Water, beyond the limits of the Crow country, and a heavy fall of snow had obliterated all traces of his course.

He now continued on for some few days, at a slower pace, round the point of the mountain towards Green River, and arrived once more at the caches, on the 14th of October.

Here they found traces of the band of Indians who had hunted them in the defile towards the head waters of Wind River. Having lost all trace of them on their way over the mountains, they had turned and followed back their trail down Green River Valley to the caches. One of these they had discovered and broken open, but it fortunately contained nothing but fragments of old iron, which they had scattered about in all directions, and then departed. In examining their deserted camp, Captain Bonneville discovered that it numbered thirty-nine fires, and had more reason than ever to congratulate himself on having escaped the clutches of such a formidable band of freebooters.

He now turned his course southward, under cover of the mountains, and on the 25th of October reached Liberge's Ford, a tributary of the Colorado, where he came suddenly upon the trail of this same war party, which had crossed the stream so recently, that the banks were yet wet with the water that had been splashed upon them. To judge from their tracks, they could not be less than three hundred warriors, and apparently of the Crow nation.

Captain Bonneville was extremely uneasy lest this overpowering force should come upon him in some place where he would not have the means of fortifying himself promptly. He now moved towards Hane's Fork, another tributary of the Colorado, where he encamped, and remained during the 26th of October. Seeing a large cloud of smoke to the south, he supposed it to arise from some encampment of Shoshonies, and sent scouts to procure information, and to purchase a lodge. It was, in fact, a band of Shoshonies, but with them were encamped Fitzpatrick and his party of trappers. That active leader had an eventful story to relate of his fortunes in the country of the Crows. After parting with Captain Bonneville on the banks of the Bighorn, he made for the west, to trap upon Powder and Tongue rivers. He had between twenty and thirty men with him, and about one hundred horses. So large a cavalcade could not pass through the Crow country without attracting the attention of its freebooting hordes. A large band of

Crows were soon on their traces, and came up with them on the 5th of September, just as they had reached Tongue River. The Crow chief came forward with great appearance of friendship, and proposed to Fitzpatrick that they should encamp together. The latter, however, not having any faith in the Crows, declined the invitation, and pitched his camp three miles off. He then rode over, with two or three men, to visit the Crow chief, by whom he was received with great apparent cordiality. In the meantime, however, a party of young braves, who considered themselves absolved by his distrust from all scruples of honor, made a circuit privately, and dashed into his encampment. Captain Stewart, who had remained there in the absence of Fitzpatrick, behaved with great spirit; but the Crows were too numerous and active. They had got possession of the camp, and soon made booty of everything—carrying off all the horses. On their way back they met Fitzpatrick returning to his camp; and finished their exploit by rifling and nearly stripping him.

A negotiation now took place between the plundered white men and the triumphant Crows; what eloquence and management Fitzpatrick made use of, we do not know, but he succeeded in prevailing upon the Crow chieftain to return him his horses and many of his traps; together with his rifles and a few rounds of ammunition for each man. He then set out with all speed to abandon the Crow country, before he should meet with any fresh disasters.

After his departure, the consciences of some of the most orthodox Crows pricked them sorely for having suffered such a cavalcade to escape out of their hands. Anxious to wipe off so foul a stigma on the reputation of the Crow nation, they followed on his trail, nor quit hovering about him on his march until they had stolen a number of his best horses and mules. It was, doubtless, this same band which came upon the lonely trapper on the Popo Agie, and generously gave him an old buffalo robe in exchange for his rifle, his traps, and all his accoutrements. With these anecdotes, we shall, for the present, take our leave of the Crow country and its vagabond chivalry.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A REGION OF NATURAL CURIOSITIES.—THE PLAIN OF WHITE CLAY.—HOT SPRINGS.—THE BEER SPRING.—DEPARTURE TO SEEK THE FREE TRAPPERS.—PLAIN OF PORTNEUF.—LAVA.—CHASMS AND GULLIES.—BANNECK INDIANS—THEIR HUNT OF THE BUFFALO.—HUNTERS' FEAST.—TRENCHER HEROES.—BULLYING OF AN ABSENT FOE.—THE DAMP COMRADE.—THE INDIAN SPY.—MEETING WITH HODGKISS—HIS ADVENTURES.—POORDEVIL INDIANS.—TRIUMPH OF THE BANNECKS.—BLACKFEET POLICY IN WAR.

ROSSING an elevated ridge, Captain Bonneville now came upon Bear River, which, from its source to its entrance into the Great Salt Lake, describes the figure of a horseshoe. One of the principal head waters of this river, although supposed to abound with beaver, has never been visited by the trapper; rising among rugged mountains, and being barricadoed by fallen pine-trees and tremendous precipices.

Proceeding down this river, the party encamped, on the 6th of November, at the outlet of a lake about thirty miles long, and from two to three miles in width, completely imbedded in low ranges of mountains, and connected with Bear River by an impassable swamp. It is called the Little Lake, to distinguish it from the great one of salt water.

On the 10th of November, Captain Bonneville visited a place in the neighborhood which is quite a region of natural curiosities. An area of about half a mile square presents a level surface of white clay or fuller's earth, perfectly spotless, resembling a great slab of Parian marble, or a sheet of dazzling snow. The effect is strikingly beautiful at all times: in summer, when it is surrounded with verdure, or in autumn, when it contrasts its bright immaculate surface with the withered herbage. Seen from a distant eminence, it then shines like a mirror, set in the brown landscape. Around this plain are clustered numerous springs of various sizes and temperatures. One of them, of scalding heat, boils furiously and incessantly, rising to the height of two or three feet. In another place, there is an aperture in the earth, from which rushes a column of steam that forms a perpetual cloud. The ground for some distance around sounds hollow, and startles the solitary trapper, as he hears the tramp of his horse giving the sound of a muffled drum. He pictures to himself a mysterious gulf below, a place of hidden fires, and gazes round him with awe and uneasiness.

The most noted curiosity, however, of this singular region, is the *Beer Spring*, of which trappers give wonderful accounts. They are said to turn aside from their route through the country to drink of its waters, with as much eagerness as the Arab seeks some famous well of the desert. Captain Bonneville describes it as having the taste of beer. His men drank it with avidity, and in

copious draughts. It did not appear to him to possess any medicinal properties, or to produce any peculiar effects. The Indians, however, refuse to taste it, and endeavor to persuade the white men from doing so.

We have heard this also called the Soda Spring, and described as containing iron and sulphur. It probably possesses some of the properties of the Ballston water.

The time had now arrived for Captain Bonneville to go in quest of the party of free trappers, detached in the beginning of July, under the command of Mr. Hodgkiss, to trap upon the head waters of Salmon River. His intention was to unite them with the party with which he was at present travelling, that all might go into quarters together for the winter. Accordingly, on the 11th of November, he took a temporary leave of his band, appointing a rendezvous on Snake River, and, accompanied by three men, set out upon his journey. His route lay across the plain of the Portneuf, a tributary stream of Snake River, called after an unfortunate Canadian trapper, murdered by the Indians. The whole country through which he passed, bore evidence of volcanic convulsions and conflagrations in the olden time. Great masses of lava lay scattered about in every direction; the crags and cliffs had apparently been under the action of fire; the rocks in some places seemed to have been in a state of fusion; the plain was rent and split with deep chasms and gullies, some of which were partly filled with lava.

They had not proceeded far, however, before they saw a party of horsemen galloping full tilt towards them. They instantly turned, and made full speed for the covert of a woody stream, to fortify themselves among the trees. The Indians came to a halt, and one of them came forward alone. He reached Captain Bonneville and his men just as they were dismounting and about to post themselves. A few words dispelled all uneasiness. It was a party of twenty-five Banneck Indians, friendly to the whites, and they proposed, through their envoy, that both parties should encamp together, and hunt the buffalo, of which they had discovered several large herds hard by. Captain Bonneville cheerfully assented to their proposition, being curious to see their manner of hunting.

Both parties accordingly encamped together on a convenient spot, and prepared for the hunt. The Indians first posted a boy on a small hill near the camp, to keep a look out for enemies. The "runners," then, as they are called, mounted on fleet horses, and armed with bows and arrows, moved slowly and cautiously towards the buffalo, keeping as much as possible out of sight, in hollows and ravines. When within a proper distance, a signal was given, and they all opened at once like a pack of hounds, with a full chorus of yells, dashing into the middle of the herds, and launching their arrows to the right and left. The plain seemed absolutely to shake under the tramp of the buffalo, as they scoured off. The

cows in headlong panic, the bulls furious with rage, uttering deep roars, and occasionally turning with a desperate rush upon their pursuers. Nothing could surpass the spirit, grace, and dexterity, with which the Indians managed their horses; wheeling and coursing among the affrighted herd, and launching their arrows with unerring aim. In the midst of the apparent confusion, they selected their victims with perfect judgment, generally aiming at the fattest of the cows, the flesh of the bull being nearly worthless, at this season of the year. In a few minutes, each of the hunters had crippled three or four cows. A single shot was sufficient for the purpose, and the animal, once maimed, was left to be completely dispatched at the end of the chase. Frequently, a cow was killed on the spot by a single arrow. In one instance, Captain Bonneville saw an Indian shoot his arrow completely through the body of a cow, so that it struck in the ground beyond. The bulls, however, are not so easily killed as the cows, and always cost the hunter several arrows, sometimes making battle upon the horses, and chasing them furiously, though severely wounded, with the darts still sticking in their flesh.

The grand scamper of the hunt being over, the Indians proceeded to dispatch the animals that had been disabled; then cutting up the carcasses, they returned with loads of meat to the camp, where the choicest pieces were soon roasting before large fires, and a hunter's feast succeeded; at which Captain Bonneville and his men

were qualified, by previous fasting, to perform their parts with great vigor.

Some men are said to wax valorous upon a full stomach, and such seemed to be the case with the Banneck braves, who, in proportion as they crammed themselves with buffalo meat, grew stout of heart, until, the supper at an end, they began to chant war songs, setting forth their mighty deeds, and the victories they had gained over the Blackfeet. Warming with the theme, and inflating themselves with their own eulogies, these magnanimous heroes of the trencher would start up, advance a short distance beyond the light of the fire, and apostrophize most vehemently their Blackfeet enemies, as though they had been within hearing. Ruffling, and swelling, and snorting, and slapping their breasts, and brandishing their arms, they would vociferate all their exploits; reminding the Blackfeet how they had drenched their towns in tears and blood; enumerate the blows they had inflicted, the warriors they had slain, the scalps they had brought off in triumph. Then, having said everything that could stir a man's spleen or pique his valor, they would dare their imaginary hearers, now that the Bannecks were few in number, to come and take their revenge—receiving no reply to this valorous bravado, they would conclude by all kinds of sneers and insults, deriding the Blackfeet for dastards and poltroons, that dared not accept their challenge. Such is the kind of swaggering and rodomontade in which the "red men"

are prone to indulge in their vainglorious moments; for, with all their vaunted taciturnity, they are vehemently prone at times to become eloquent about their exploits, and to sound their own trumpet.

Having vented their valor in this fierce effervescence, the Banneck braves gradually calmed down, lowered their crests, smoothed their ruffled feathers, and betook themselves to sleep, without placing a single guard over their camp; so that, had the Blackfeet taken them at their word, but few of these braggart heroes might have survived for any further boasting.

On the following morning, Captain Bonneville purchased a supply of buffalo meat from his braggadocio friends; who, with all their vaporing, were in fact a very forlorn horde, destitute of fire-arms, and of almost everything that constitutes riches in savage life. The bargain concluded, the Bannecks set off for their village, which was situated, they said, at the mouth of the Portneuf, and Captain Bonneville and his companions shaped their course towards Snake River.

Arrived on the banks of that river, he found it rapid and boisterous, but not too deep to be forded. In traversing it, however, one of the horses was swept suddenly from his footing, and his rider was flung from the saddle into the midst of the stream. Both horse and horseman were extricated without any damage, excepting that the latter was completely drenched, so that it was necessary to kindle a fire to dry him. While they were thus occu-

pied, one of the party looking up, perceived an Indian scout cautiously reconnoitring them from the summit of a neighboring hill. The moment he found himself discovered, he disappeared behind the hill. From his furtive movements, Captain Bonneville suspected him to be a scout from the Blackfeet camp, and that he had gone to report what he had seen to his companions. It would not do to loiter in such a neighborhood, so the kindling of the fire was abandoned, the drenched horseman mounted in dripping condition, and the little band pushed forward directly into the plain, going at a smart pace, until they had gained a considerable distance from the place of supposed danger. Here encamping for the night, in the midst of abundance of sage, or wormwood, which afforded fodder for their horses, they kindled a huge fire for the benefit of their damp comrade, and then proceeded to prepare a sumptuous supper of buffalo humps and ribs, and other choice bits, which they had brought with them. After a hearty repast, relished with an appetite unknown to city epicures, they stretched themselves upon their couches of skins, and under the starry canopy of heaven enjoyed the sound and sweet sleep of hardy and well-fed mountaineers.

They continued on their journey for several days, without any incident worthy of notice, and on the 19th of November, came upon traces of the party of which they were in search; such as burnt patches of prairie, and deserted camping grounds. All these were carefully ex-

amined, to discover by their freshness or antiquity the probable time that the trappers had left them; at length, after much wandering and investigating, they came upon the regular trail of the hunting party, which led into the mountains, and following it up briskly, came about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 20th, upon the encampment of Hodgkiss and his band of free trappers, in the bosom of a mountain valley.

It will be recollected that these free trappers, who were masters of themselves and their movements, had refused to accompany Captain Bonneville back to Green River in the preceding month of July, preferring to trap about the upper waters of the Salmon River, where they expected to find plenty of beaver, and a less dangerous neighborhood. Their hunt had not been very successful. They had penetrated the great range of mountains among which some of the upper branches of Salmon River take their rise, but had become so entangled among immense and almost impassable barricades of fallen pines, and so impeded by tremendous precipices, that a great part of their season had been wasted among those mountains. At one time they had made their way through them, and reached the Boisée River; but meeting with a band of Banneck Indians, from whom they apprehended hostilities, they had again taken shelter among the mountains, where they were found by Captain Bonneville. In the neighborhood of their encampment, the captain had the good fortune to meet with a family

of those wanderers of the mountains, emphatically called "les dignes de pitie," or Poordevil Indians. These, however, appear to have forfeited the title, for they had with them a fine lot of skins of beaver, elk, deer, and mountain sheep. These Captain Bonneville purchased from them at a fair valuation, and sent them off astonished at their own wealth, and no doubt objects of envy to all their pitiful tribe.

Being now reinforced by Hodgkiss and his band of free trappers, Captain Bonneville put himself at the head of the united parties, and set out to rejoin those he had recently left at the Beer Spring, that they might all go into winter quarters on Snake River. On his route, he encountered many heavy falls of snow, which melted almost immediately, so as not to impede his march, and on the 4th of December he found his other party, encamped at the very place where he had partaken in the buffalo hunt with the Bannecks.

That braggart horde was encamped but about three miles off, and were just then in high glee and festivity, and more swaggering than ever, celebrating a prodigious victory. It appeared that a party of their braves being out on a hunting excursion, discovered a band of Blackfeet moving, as they thought, to surprise their hunting camp. The Bannecks immediately posted themselves on each side of a dark ravine, through which the enemy must pass, and just as they were entangled in the midst of it, attacked them with great fury. The Blackfeet,

struck with sudden panic, threw off their buffalo robes and fled, leaving one of their warriors dead on the spot. The victors eagerly gathered up the spoils; but their greatest prize was the scalp of the Blackfoot brave. This they bore off in triumph to their village, where it had ever since been an object of the greatest exultation and rejoicing. It had been elevated upon a pole in the centre of the village, where the warriors had celebrated the scalp dance round it, with war feasts, war songs, and warlike harangues. It had then been given up to the women and boys; who had paraded it up and down the village with shouts and chants and antic dances; occasionally saluting it with all kinds of taunts, invectives, and revilings.

The Blackfeet, in this affair, do not appear to have acted up to the character which has rendered them objects of such terror. Indeed, their conduct in war, to the inexperienced observer, is full of inconsistencies; at one time they are headlong in courage, and heedless of danger; at another time cautious almost to cowardice. To understand these apparent incongruities, one must know their principles of warfare. A war party, however triumphant, if they lose a warrior in the fight, bring back a cause of mourning to their people, which casts a shade over the glory of their achievement. Hence, the Indian is often less fierce and reckless in general battle, than he is in a private brawl; and the chiefs are checked in their boldest undertakings by the fear of sacrificing their warriors.

This peculiarity is not confined to the Blackfeet. Among the Osages, says Captain Bonneville, when a warrior falls in battle, his comrades, though they may have fought with consummate valor, and won a glorious victory, will leave their arms upon the field of battle, and returning home with dejected countenances, will halt without the encampment, and wait until the relatives of the slain come forth and invite them to mingle again with their people.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WINTER CAMP AT THE PORTNEUF.—FINE SPRINGS.—THE BANNECK INDIANS.—THEIR HONESTY.—CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE PREPARES FOR AN EXPEDITION.—CHRISTMAS.—THE AMERICAN FALLS.—WILD SCENERY.—FISHING FALLS.—SNAKE INDIANS.—SCENERY ON THE BRUNEAU.—VIEW OF VOLCANIC COUNTRY FROM A MOUNTAIN.—POWDER RIVER.—SHOSHOKOES, OR ROOT DIGGERS.—THEIR CHARACTER, HABITS, HABITATIONS, DOGS.—VANITY AT ITS LAST SHIFT.

IN establishing his winter camp near the Portneuf, Captain Bonneville had drawn off to some little distance from his Banneck friends, to avoid all annoyance from their intimacy or intrusions. In so doing, however, he had been obliged to take up his quarters on the extreme edge of the flat land, where he was encompassed with ice and snow, and had nothing better for his horses to subsist on than wormwood. The Bannecks, on the contrary, were encamped among fine springs of water, where there was grass in abundance. Some of these springs gush out of the earth in sufficient quantity to turn a mill; and furnish beautiful streams, clear as crystal, and full of trout of a large size; which may be seen darting about the transparent water.

Winter now set in regularly. The snow had fallen fre-

quently, and in large quantities, and covered the ground to the depth of a foot; and the continued coldness of the weather prevented any thaw.

By degrees, a distrust which at first subsisted between the Indians and the trappers, subsided, and gave way to mutual confidence and good-will. A few presents convinced the chiefs that the white men were their friends: nor were the white men wanting in proofs of the honesty and good faith of their savage neighbors. Occasionally, the deep snow and the want of fodder obliged them to turn their weakest horses out to roam in quest of sustenance. If they at any time strayed to the camp of the Bannecks, they were immediately brought back. It must be confessed, however, that if the stray horse happened, by any chance, to be in vigorous plight and good condition, though he was equally sure to be returned by the honest Bannecks, yet it was always after the lapse of several days, and in a very gaunt and jaded state; and always with the remark, that they had found him a long way off. The uncharitable were apt to surmise that he had, in the interim been well used up in a buffalo hunt; but those accustomed to Indian morality in the matter of horseflesh, considered it a singular evidence of honesty, that he should be brought back at all.

Being convinced, therefore, from these and other circumstances, that his people were encamped in the neighborhood of a tribe as honest as they were valiant, and satisfied that they would pass their winter unmolested,

Captain Bonneville prepared for a reconnoitring expedition of great extent and peril. This was, to penetrate to the Hudson's Bay establishments on the banks of the Columbia, and to make himself acquainted with the country and the Indian tribes; it being one part of his scheme to establish a trading post somewhere on the lower part of the river, so as to participate in the trade lost to the United States by the capture of Astoria. This expedition would, of course, take him through the Snake River country, and across the Blue Mountains, the scenes of so much hardship and disaster to Hunt and Crooks, and their Astorian bands, who first explored it, and he would have to pass through it in the same frightful season, the depth of the winter.

The idea of risk and hardship, however, only served to stimulate the adventurous spirit of the captain. He chose three companions for his journey, put up a small stock of necessaries in the most portable form, and selected five horses and mules for themselves and their baggage. He proposed to rejoin his band in the early part of March, at the winter encampment near the Portneuf. All these arrangements being completed, he mounted his horse on Christmas morning, and set off with his three comrades. They halted a little beyond the Banneck camp, and made their Christmas dinner, which, if not a very merry, was a very hearty one, after which they resumed their journey.

They were obliged to travel slowly, to spare their

horses; for the snow had increased in depth to eighteen inches; and though somewhat packed and frozen, was not sufficiently so to yield firm footing. Their route lay to the west, down along the left side of Snake River; and they were several days in reaching the first, or American Falls. The banks of the river, for a considerable distance, both above and below the falls, have a volcanic character: masses of basaltic rock are piled one upon another; the water makes its way through their broken chasms, boiling through narrow channels, or pitching in beautiful cascades over ridges of basaltic columns.

Beyond these falls, they came to a picturesque, but inconsiderable stream, called the Cassié. It runs through a level valley, about four miles wide, where the soil is good; but the prevalent coldness and dryness of the climate is unfavorable to vegetation. Near to this stream there is a small mountain of mica slate, including garnets. Granite, in small blocks, is likewise seen in this neighborhood, and white sandstone. From this river, the travellers had a prospect of the snowy heights of the Salmon River Mountains to the north; the nearest, at least fifty miles distant.

In pursuing his course westward, Captain Bonneville generally kept several miles from Snake River, crossing the heads of its tributary streams; though he often found the open country so encumbered by volcanic rocks as to render travelling extremely difficult. Whenever he approached Snake River, he found it running through a

broad chasm, with steep, perpendicular sides of basaltic rock. After several days' travel across a level plain, he came to a part of the river which filled him with astonishment and admiration. As far as the eye could reach, the river was walled in by perpendicular cliffs two hundred and fifty feet high, beetling like dark and gloomy battlements, while blocks and fragments lay in masses at their feet, in the midst of the boiling and whirling current. Just above, the whole stream pitched in one cascade above forty feet in height, with a thundering sound, casting up a volume of spray that hung in the air like a silver mist. These are called by some the Fishing Falls, as the salmon are taken here in immense quantities. They cannot get by these falls.

After encamping at this place all night, Captain Bonneville, at sunrise, descended with his party through a narrow ravine, or rather crevice, in the vast wall of basaltic rock which bordered the river; this being the only mode, for many miles, of getting to the margin of the stream.

The snow lay in a thin crust along the banks of the river, so that their travelling was much more easy than it had been hitherto. There were foot tracks, also, made by the natives, which greatly facilitated their progress. Occasionally, they met the inhabitants of this wild region; a timid race, and but scantily provided with the necessaries of life. Their dress consisted of a mantle about four feet square, formed of strips of rabbit skins sewed together: this they hung over their shoulders, in

the ordinary Indian mode of wearing the blanket. Their weapons were bows and arrows; the latter tipped with obsidian, which abounds in the neighborhood. Their huts were shaped like haystacks, and constructed of branches of willow covered with long grass, so as to be warm and comfortable. Occasionally, they were surrounded by small inclosures of wormwood, about three feet high, which gave them a cottage-like appearance. Three or four of these tenements were occasionally grouped together in some wild and striking situation, and had a picturesque effect. Sometimes they were in sufficient number to form a small hamlet. From these people, Captain Bonneville's party frequently purchased salmon, dried in an admirable manner, as were likewise the roes. This seemed to be their prime article of food; but they were extremely anxious to get buffalo meat in exchange.

The high walls and rocks, within which the travellers had been so long inclosed, now occasionally presented openings, through which they were enabled to ascend to the plain, and to cut off considerable bends of the river.

Throughout the whole extent of this vast and singular chasm, the scenery of the river is said to be of the most wild and romantic character. The rocks present every variety of masses and grouping. Numerous small streams come rushing and boiling through narrow clefts and ravines: one of a considerable size issued from the face of a precipice, within twenty-five feet of its summit; and

after running in nearly a horizontal line for about one hundred feet, fell, by numerous small cascades, to the rocky bank of the river.

In its career through this vast and singular defile, Snake River is upwards of three hundred yards wide, and as clear as spring water. Sometimes it steals along with a tranquil and noiseless course; at other times, for miles and miles, it dashes on in a thousand rapids, wild and beautiful to the eye, and lulling the ear with the soft tumult of plashing waters.

Many of the tributary streams of Snake River rival it in the wildness and picturesqueness of their scenery. That called the Bruneau is particularly cited. It runs through a tremendous chasm, rather than a valley, extending upwards of a hundred and fifty miles. You come upon it on a sudden, in traversing a level plain. It seems as if you could throw a stone across from cliff to cliff; yet, the valley is near two thousand feet deep: so that the river looks like an inconsiderable stream. Basaltic rocks rise perpendicularly, so that it is impossible to get from the plain to the water, or from the river margin to the plain. The current is bright and limpid. Hot springs are found on the borders of this river. One bursts out of the cliffs forty feet above the river, in a stream sufficient to turn a mill, and sends up a cloud of vapor.

We find a characteristic picture of this volcanic region of mountains and streams, furnished by the journal of

Mr. Wyeth, which lies before us; who ascended a peak in the neighborhood we are describing. From this summit, the country, he says, appears an indescribable chaos; the tops of the hills exhibit the same strata as far as the eye can reach; and appear to have once formed the level of the country; and the valleys to be formed by the sinking of the earth, rather than the rising of the hills. Through the deep cracks and chasms thus formed, the rivers and brooks make their way, which renders it difficult to follow them. All these basaltic channels are called "cut rocks" by the trappers. Many of the mountain streams disappear in the plains; either absorbed by their thirsty soil, and by the porous surface of the lava, or swallowed up in gulfs and chasms.

On the 12th of January (1834), Captain Bonneville reached Powder River; much the largest stream that he had seen since leaving the Portneuf. He struck it about three miles above its entrance into Snake River. Here he found himself above the lower narrows and defiles of the latter river, and in an open and level country. The natives now made their appearance in considerable numbers, and evinced the most insatiable curiosity respecting the white men; sitting in groups for hours together, exposed to the bleakest winds, merely for the pleasure of gazing upon the strangers, and watching every movement. These are of that branch of the great Snake tribe called Shoshokoes, or Root Diggers, from their subsisting, in a great measure, on the roots of the earth; though

they likewise take fish in great quantities, and hunt, in a small way. They are, in general, very poor; destitute of most of the comforts of life, and extremely indolent: but a mild, inoffensive race. They differ, in many respects, from the other branch of the Snake tribe, the Shoshonies, who possess horses, are more roving and adventurous, and hunt the buffalo.

On the following day, as Captain Bonneville approached the mouth of Powder River, he discovered at least a hundred families of these Diggers, as they are familiarly called, assembled in one place. The women and children kept at a distance, perched among the rocks and cliffs, their eager curiosity being somewhat dashed with fear. From their elevated posts, they scrutinized the strangers with the most intense earnestness; regarding them with almost as much awe as if they had been beings of a supernatural order.

The men, however, were by no means so shy and reserved; but importuned Captain Bonneville and his companions excessively by their curiosity. Nothing escaped their notice; and anything they could lay their hands on underwent the most minute examination. To get rid of such inquisitive neighbors, the travellers kept on for a considerable distance, before they encamped for the night.

The country hereabout was generally level and sandy; producing very little grass, but a considerable quantity of sage or wormwood. The plains were diversified by

isolated hills, all cut off, as it were, about the same height, so as to have tabular summits. In this they resembled the isolated hills of the great prairies east of the Rocky Mountains; especially those found on the plains of the Arkansas.

The high precipices which had hitherto walled in the channel of Snake River had now disappeared, and the banks were of the ordinary height. It should be observed, that the great valleys or plains through which the Snake River wound its course, were generally of great breadth, extending on each side from thirty to forty miles; where the view was bounded by unbroken ridges of mountains.

The travellers found but little snow in the neighborhood of Powder River, though the weather continued intensely cold. They learnt a lesson, however, from their forlorn friends, the Root Diggers, which they subsequently found of great service in their wintry wanderings. They frequently observed them to be furnished with long ropes, twisted from the bark of the wormwood. This they used as a slow match, carrying it always lighted. Whenever they wished to warm themselves, they would gather together a little dry wormwood, apply the match, and in an instant produce a cheering blaze.

Captain Bonneville gives a cheerless account of a village of these Diggers, which he saw in crossing the plain below Powder River. "They live," says he, "without

any further protection from the inclemency of the season than a sort of break-weather, about three feet high, composed of sage (or wormwood), and erected around them in the shape of a half moon." Whenever he met with them, however, they had always a large suite of half-starved dogs; for these animals, in savage as well as in civilized life, seem to be the concomitants of beggary.

These dogs, it must be allowed, were of more use than the beggarly curs of cities. The Indian children used them in hunting the small game of the neighborhood, such as rabbits and prairie dogs; in which mongrel kind of chase they acquitted themselves with some credit.

Sometimes the Diggers aspire to nobler game, and succeed in entrapping the antelope, the fleetest animal of the prairies. The process by which this is effected is somewhat singular. When the snow has disappeared, says Captain Bonneville, and the ground become soft, the women go into the thickest fields of wormwood, and pulling it up in great quantities, construct with it a hedge, about three feet high, inclosing about a hundred acres. A single opening is left for the admission of the game. This done, the women conceal themselves behind the wormwood, and wait patiently for the coming of the antelopes; which sometimes enter this spacious trap in considerable numbers. As soon as they are in, the women give the signal, and the men hasten to play their part. But one of them enters the pen at a time; and,

after chasing the terrified animals round the inclosure, is relieved by one of his companions. In this way the hunters take their turns, relieving each other, and keeping up a continued pursuit by relays, without fatigue to themselves. The poor antelopes, in the end, are so wearied down, that the whole party of men enter and dispatch them with clubs—not one escaping that has entered the inclosure. The most curious circumstance in this chase is, that an animal so fleet and agile as the antelope, and straining for its life, should range round and round this fated inclosure, without attempting to overleap the low barrier which surrounds it. Such, however, is said to be the fact; and such their only mode of hunting the antelope.

Notwithstanding the absence of all comfort and convenience in their habitations, and the general squalidness of their appearance, the Shoshokoes do not appear to be destitute of ingenuity. They manufacture good ropes, and even a tolerably fine thread, from a sort of weed found in their neighborhood; and construct bowls and jugs out of a kind of basket-work formed from small strips of wood plaited: these, by the aid of a little wax, they render perfectly water tight. Beside the roots on which they mainly depend for subsistence, they collect great quantities of seed of various kinds, beaten with one hand out of the tops of the plants into wooden bowls held for that purpose. The seed thus collected is winnowed and parched, and ground between two stones into

a kind of meal or flour; which, when mixed with water, forms a very palatable paste or gruel.

Some of these people, more provident and industrious than the rest, lay up a stock of dried salmon, and other fish, for winter: with these, they were ready to traffic with the travellers for any objects of utility in Indian life; giving a large quantity in exchange for an awl, a knife, or a fish-hook. Others were in the most abject state of want and starvation, and would even gather up the fish-bones which the travellers threw away after a repast, warm them over again at the fire, and pick them with the greatest avidity.

The further Captain Bonneville advanced into the country of these Root Diggers, the more evidence he perceived of their rude and forlorn condition. "They were destitute," says he, "of the necessary covering to protect them from the weather; and seemed to be in the most unsophisticated ignorance of any other propriety or advantage in the use of clothing. One old dame had absolutely nothing on her person but a thread round her neck, from which was pendent a solitary bead."

What stage of human destitution, however, is too destitute for vanity! Though these naked and forlorn-looking beings had neither toilet to arrange, nor beauty to contemplate, their greatest passion was for a mirror. It was a "great medicine," in their eyes. The sight of one was sufficient, at any time, to throw them into a par-

oxysm of eagerness and delight; and they were ready to give anything they had for the smallest fragment in which they might behold their squalid features. With this simple instance of vanity in its primitive but vigorous state, we shall close our remarks on the Root Diggers.

CHAPTER XXX.

TEMPERATURE OF THE CLIMATE.—ROOT DIGGERS ON HORSEBACK.—AN INDIAN GUIDE.—MOUNTAIN PROSPECTS.—THE GRAND RONDO.—DIFFICULTIES ON SNAKE RIVER.—A SCRAMBLE OVER THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.—SUFFERINGS FROM HUNGER.—PROSPECT OF THE IMMAHAH VALLEY.—THE EXHAUSTED TRAVELLER.

THE temperature of the regions west of the Rocky Mountains is much milder than in the same latitudes on the Atlantic side; the upper plains, however, which lie at a distance from the sea-coast, are subject in winter to considerable vicissitude; being traversed by lofty "sierras," crowned with perpetual snow, which often produce flaws and streaks of intense cold. This was experienced by Captain Bonneville and his companions in their progress westward. At the time when they left the Bannecks, Snake River was frozen hard: as they proceeded, the ice became broken and floating; it gradually disappeared, and the weather became warm and pleasant, as they approached a tributary stream called the Little Wyer; and the soil, which was generally of a watery clay, with occasional intervals of sand, was soft to the tread of the horses. After a time, however, the mountains approached and flanked

the river; the snow lay deep in the valleys, and the current was once more ice-bound.

Here they were visited by a party of Root Diggers, who were apparently rising in the world, for they had "horse to ride and weapon to wear," and were altogether better clad and equipped than any of the tribe that Captain Bonneville had met with. They were just from the plain of Boisée River, where they had left a number of their tribe, all as well provided as themselves, having guns, horses, and comfortable clothing. All these they obtained from the Lower Nez Percés, with whom they were in habits of frequent traffic. They appeared to have imbibed from that tribe their noncombative principles, being mild and inoffensive in their manners. Like them, also, they had something of religious feelings; for Captain Bonneville observed that, before eating, they washed their hands and made a short prayer; which he understood was their invariable custom. From these Indians, he obtained a considerable supply of fish, and an excellent and well-conditioned horse, to replace one which had become too weak for the journey.

The travellers now moved forward with renovated spirits; the snow, it is true, lay deeper and deeper as they advanced, but they trudged on merrily, considering themselves well provided for the journey, which could not be of much longer duration.

They had intended to proceed up the banks of Gun Creek, a stream which flows into Snake River from the

west; but were assured by the natives that the route in that direction was impracticable. The latter advised them to keep along Snake River, where they would not be impeded by the snow. Taking one of the Diggers for a guide, they set off along the river, and to their joy soon found the country free from snow, as had been predicted, so that their horses once more had the benefit of tolerable pasturage. Their Digger proved an excellent guide, trudging cheerily in the advance. He made an unsuccessful shot or two at a deer and a beaver, but at night found a rabbit hole, whence he extracted the occupant, upon which, with the addition of a fish given him by the travellers, he made a hearty supper, and retired to rest, filled with good cheer and good humor.

The next day the travellers came to where the hills closed upon the river, leaving here and there intervals of undulating meadow land. The river was sheeted with ice, broken into hills at long intervals. The Digger kept on ahead of the party, crossing and recrossing the river in pursuit of game, until, unluckily, encountering a brother Digger, he stole off with him, without the ceremony of leave-taking.

Being now left to themselves, they proceeded until they came to some Indian huts, the inhabitants of which spoke a language totally different from any they had yet heard. One, however, understood the Nez Percé language, and through him they made inquiries as to their route. These Indians were extremely kind and honest,

and furnished them with a small quantity of meat; but none of them could be induced to act as guides.

Immediately in the route of the travellers lay a high mountain, which they ascended with some difficulty. The prospect from the summit was grand but disheartening. Directly before them towered the loftiest peaks of Immahah, rising far higher than the elevated ground on which they stood; on the other hand, they were enabled to scan the course of the river, dashing along through deep chasms, between rocks and precipices, until lost in a distant wilderness of mountains, which closed the savage landscape.

They remained for a long time contemplating, with perplexed and anxious eye, this wild congregation of mountain barriers, and seeking to discover some practicable passage. The approach of evening obliged them to give up the task, and to seek some camping ground for the night. Moving briskly forward, and plunging and tossing through a succession of deep snow-drifts they at length reached a valley known among trappers as the "Grand Rond," which they found entirely free from snow.

This is a beautiful and very fertile valley, about twenty miles long and five or six broad; a bright cold stream called the *Fourche de Glace*, or Ice River, runs through it. Its sheltered situation, embosomed in mountains, renders it good pasturing ground in the winter time; when the elk come down to it in great numbers, driven out of the

mountains by the snow. The Indians then resort to it to hunt. They likewise come to it in the summer time to dig the camash root, of which it produces immense quantities. When this plant is in blossom, the whole valley is tinted by its blue flowers, and looks like the ocean when overcast by a cloud.

After passing a night in this valley, the travellers in the morning scaled the neighboring hills, to look out for a more eligible route than that upon which they had unluckily fallen; and, after much reconnoitring, determined to make their way once more to the river, and to travel upon the ice when the banks should prove impassable. On the second day after this determination, they were again upon Snake River, but, contrary to their expectations, it was nearly free from ice. A narrow ribbon ran along the shore, and sometimes there was a kind of bridge across the stream, formed of old ice and snow. For a short time they jogged along the bank with tolerable facility, but at length came to where the river forced its way into the heart of the mountains, winding between tremendous walls of basaltic rock, that rose perpendicularly from the water edge, frowning in bleak and gloomy grandeur. Here difficulties of all kinds beset their path. The snow was from two to three feet deep, but soft and yielding, so that the horses had no foothold, but kept plunging forward, straining themselves by perpetual efforts. Sometimes the crags and promontories forced them upon the narrow ribbon of ice that bordered the shore; some-

times they had to scramble over vast masses of rock which had tumbled from the impending precipices; sometimes they had to cross the stream upon the hazardous bridges of ice and snow, sinking to the knee at every step; sometimes they had to scale slippery acclivities, and to pass along narrow cornices glazed with ice and sleet, a shouldering wall of rock on one side, a yawning precipice on the other, where a single false step would have been fatal. In a lower and less dangerous pass two of their horses actually fell into the river, one was saved with much difficulty, but the boldness of the shore prevented their rescuing the other, and he was swept away by the rapid current.

In this way they struggled forward, manfully braving difficulties and dangers, until they came to where the bed of the river was narrowed to a mere chasm, with perpendicular walls of rock that defied all further progress. Turning their faces now to the mountain, they endeavored to cross directly over it; but, after clambering nearly to the summit, found their path closed by insurmountable barriers.

Nothing now remained but to retrace their steps. To descend a cragged mountain, however, was more difficult and dangerous than to ascend it. They had to lower themselves, cautiously and slowly, from steep to steep; and, while they managed with difficulty to maintain their own footing, to aid their horses by holding on firmly to the rope halters, as the poor animals stumbled among

slippery rocks, or slid down icy declivities. Thus, after a day of intense cold, and severe and incessant toil, amidst the wildest of scenery, they managed, about nightfall, to reach the camping ground from which they had started in the morning, and for the first time in the course of their rugged and perilous expedition felt their hearts quailing under their multiplied hardships.

A hearty supper, a tranquilizing pipe, and a sound night's sleep, put them all in better mood, and in the morning they held a consultation as to their future movements. About four miles behind, they had remarked a small ridge of mountains approaching closely to the river. It was determined to scale this ridge, and seek a passage into the valley which must lie beyond. Should they fail in this, but one alternative remained—To kill their horses, dry the flesh for provisions, make boats of the hides, and in these commit themselves to the stream —a measure hazardous in the extreme.

A short march brought them to the foot of the mountain, but its steep and cragged sides almost discouraged hope. The only chance of scaling it was by broken masses of rock, piled one upon another, which formed a succession of crags, reaching nearly to the summit. Up these they wrought their way with indescribable difficulty and peril, in a zigzag course, climbing from rock to rock, and helping their horses up after them; which scrambled among the crags like mountain goats; now and then dislodging some huge stone, which, the moment

they had left it, would roll down the mountain, crashing and rebounding with terrific din. It was some time after dark before they reached a kind of platform on the summit of the mountain, where they could venture to encamp. The winds, which swept this naked height, had whirled all the snow into the valley beneath, so that the horses found tolerable winter pasturage on the dry grass which remained exposed. The travellers, though hungry in the extreme, were fain to make a very frugal supper; for they saw their journey was likely to be prolonged much beyond the anticipated term.

In fact, on the following day they discerned that, although already at a great elevation, they were only as yet upon the shoulder of the mountain. It proved to be a great sierra, or ridge, of immense height, running parallel to the course of the river, swelling by degrees to lofty peaks, but the outline gashed by deep and precipitous ravines. This, in fact, was a part of the chain of Blue Mountains, in which the first adventurers to Astoria experienced such hardships.

We will not pretend to accompany the travellers step by step in this tremendous mountain scramble, into which they had unconsciously betrayed themselves. Day after day did their toil continue; peak after peak had they to traverse, struggling with difficulties and hardships known only to the mountain trapper. As their course lay north, they had to ascend the southern faces of the heights, where the sun had melted the snow, so as

to render the ascent wet and slippery, and to keep both men and horses continually on the strain; while on the northern sides, the snow lay in such heavy masses that it was necessary to beat a track, down which the horses might be led. Every now and then, also, their way was impeded by tall and numerous pines, some of which had fallen, and lay in every direction.

In the midst of these toils and hardships their provisions gave out. For three days they were without food, and so reduced that they could scarcely drag themselves along. At length one of the mules, being about to give out from fatigue and famine, they hastened to dispatch him. Husbanding this miserable supply, they dried the flesh, and for three days subsisted upon the nutriment extracted from the bones. As to the meat, it was packed and preserved as long as they could do without it, not knowing how long they might remain bewildered in these desolate regions.

One of the men was now dispatched ahead to reconnoitre the country, and to discover, if possible, some more practicable route. In the meantime, the rest of the party moved on slowly. After a lapse of three days, the scout rejoined them. He informed them that Snake River ran immediately below the sierra or mountainous ridge upon which they were travelling; that it was free from precipices, and was at no great distance from them in a direct line; but that it would be impossible for them to reach it without making a weary circuit. Their

only course would be to cross the mountain ridge to the left.

Up this mountain, therefore, the weary travellers directed their steps; and the ascent, in their present weak and exhausted state, was one of the severest parts of this most painful journey. For two days were they toiling slowly from cliff to cliff, beating at every step a path through the snow for their faltering horses. At length they reached the summit, where the snow was blown off; but in descending on the opposite side, they were often plunging through deep drifts, piled in the hollows and ravines.

Their provisions were now exhausted, and they and their horses almost ready to give out with fatigue and hunger, when one afternoon, just as the sun was sinking behind a blue line of distant mountain, they came to the brow of a height from which they beheld the smooth valley of the Immahah stretched out in smiling verdure before them.

The sight inspired almost a frenzy of delight. Roused to new ardor, they forgot for a time their fatigues, and hurried down the mountain, dragging their jaded horses after them, and sometimes compelling them to slide a distance of thirty or forty feet at a time. At length they reached the banks of the Immahah. The young grass was just beginning to sprout, and the whole valley wore an aspect of softness, verdure, and repose, heightened by the contrast of the frightful region from which they had

just descended. To add to their joy, they observed Indian trails along the margin of the stream, and other signs which gave them reason to believe that there was an encampment of the Lower Nez Percés in the neighborhood, as it was within the accustomed range of that pacific and hospitable tribe.

The prospect of a supply of food stimulated them to new exertion, and they continued on as fast as the enfeebled state of themselves and their steeds would permit. At length, one of the men, more exhausted than the rest, threw himself upon the grass, and declared he could go no further. It was in vain to attempt to rouse him; his spirit had given out, and his replies only showed the dogged apathy of despair. His companions, therefore, encamped on the spot, kindled a blazing fire, and searched about for roots with which to strengthen and revive him. They all then made a starveling repast; but gathering round the fire, talked over past dangers and troubles, soothed themselves with the persuasion that all were now at an end, and went to sleep with the comforting hope that the morrow would bring them into plentiful quarters.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PROGRESS IN THE VALLEY.—AN INDIAN CAVALIER.—THE CAPTAIN FALLS INTO A LETHARGY.—A NEZ PERCÉ PATRIARCH.—HOSPITABLE TREATMENT.—THE BALD HEAD.—BARGAINING.—VALUE OF AN OLD PLAID CLOAK.—THE FAMILY HORSE.—THE COST OF AN INDIAN PRESENT.

A TRANQUIL night's rest had sufficiently restored the broken-down traveller to enable him to resume his wayfaring, and all hands set forward on the Indian trail. With all their eagerness to arrive within reach of succor, such was their feeble and emaciated condition, that they advanced but slowly. Nor is it a matter of surprise that they should almost have lost heart as well as strength. It was now (the 16th of February) fifty-three days that they had been travelling in the midst of winter, exposed to all kinds of privations and hardships; and for the last twenty days they had been entangled in the wild and desolate labyrinths of the snowy mountains; climbing and descending icy precipices, and nearly starved with cold and hunger.

All the morning they continued following the Indian trail without seeing a human being, and were beginning to be discouraged, when, about noon, they discovered a

horseman at a distance. He was coming directly towards them; but on discovering them, suddenly reined up his steed, came to a halt, and, after reconnoitring them for a time with great earnestness, seemed about to make a cautious retreat. They eagerly made signs of peace, and endeavored, with the utmost anxiety, to induce him to approach. He remained for some time in doubt; but at length, having satisfied himself that they were not enemies, came galloping up to them. He was a fine, haughty-looking savage, fancifully decorated, and mounted on a high-mettled steed, with gaudy trappings and equipments. It was evident that he was a warrior of some consequence among his tribe. His whole deportment had something in it of barbaric dignity; he felt, perhaps, his temporary superiority in personal array, and in the spirit of his steed, to the poor, ragged, travel-worn trappers, and their half-starved horses. Approaching them with an air of protection, he gave them his hand, and, in the Nez Percé language, invited them to his camp, which was only a few miles distant; where he had plenty to eat, and plenty of horses, and would cheerfully share his good things with them.

His hospitable invitation was joyfully accepted; he lingered but a moment, to give directions by which they might find his camp, and then, wheeling round, and giving reins to his mettlesome steed, was soon out of sight. The travellers followed with gladdened hearts, but at a snail's pace; for their poor horses could scarcely drag

one leg after the other. Captain Bonneville, however, experienced a sudden and singular change of feeling. Hitherto, the necessity of conducting his party, and of providing against every emergency, had kept his mind upon the stretch, and his whole system braced and excited. In no one instance had he flagged in spirit, or felt disposed to succumb. Now, however, that all danger was over, and the march of a few miles would bring them to repose and abundance, his energies suddenly deserted him; and every faculty, mental and physical, was totally relaxed. He had not proceeded two miles from the point where he had had the interview with the Nez Percé chief, when he threw himself upon the earth, without the power or will to move a muscle, or exert a thought, and sank almost instantly into a profound and dreamless sleep. His companions again came to a halt, and encamped beside him, and there they passed the night.

The next morning Captain Bonneville awakened from his long and heavy sleep, much refreshed; and they all resumed their creeping progress. They had not been long on the march, when eight or ten of the Nez Percé tribe came galloping to meet them, leading fresh horses to bear them to their camp. Thus gallantly mounted, they felt new life infused into their languid frames, and dashing forward, were soon at the lodges of the Nez Percés. Here they found about twelve families living together, under the patriarchal sway of an ancient and

venerable chief. He received them with the hospitality of the golden age, and with something of the same kind of fare; for while he opened his arms to make them welcome, the only repast he set before them consisted of roots. They could have wished for something more hearty and substantial; but, for want of better, made a voracious meal on these humble viands. The repast being over, the best pipe was lighted and sent round; and this was a most welcome luxury, having lost their smoking apparatus twelve days before, among the mountains.

While they were thus enjoying themselves, their poor horses were led to the best pastures in the neighborhood, where they were turned loose to revel on the fresh sprouting grass; so that they had better fare than their masters.

Captain Bonneville soon felt himself quite at home among these quiet, inoffensive people. His long residence among their cousins, the Upper Nez Percés, had made him conversant with their language, modes of expression, and all their habitudes. He soon found, too, that he was well known among them, by report, at least, from the constant interchange of visits and messages between the two branches of the tribe. They at first addressed him by his name, giving him his title of captain, with a French accent; but they soon gave him a title of their own, which, as usual with Indian titles, had a peculiar signification. In the case of the captain, it had somewhat of a whimsical origin.

As he sat chatting and smoking in the midst of them, he would occasionally take off his cap. Whenever he did so, there was a sensation in the surrounding circle. The Indians would half rise from their recumbent posture, and gaze upon his uncovered head, with their usual exclamation of astonishment. The worthy captain was completely bald; a phenomenon very surprising in their eyes. They were at a loss to know whether he had been scalped in battle, or enjoyed a natural immunity from that belligerent infliction. In a little while, he became known among them by an Indian name, signifying "the bald chief." "A soubriquet," observes the captain, "for which I can find no parallel in history since the days of 'Charles the Bald.'"

Although the travellers had banqueted on roots, and been regaled with tobacco smoke, yet their stomachs craved more generous fare. In approaching the lodges of the Nez Percés, they had indulged in fond anticipations of venison and dried salmon; and dreams of the kind still haunted their imaginations, and could not be conjured down. The keen appetites of mountain trappers, quickened by a fortnight's fasting, at length got the better of all scruples of pride, and they fairly begged some fish or flesh from the hospitable savages. The latter, however, were slow to break in upon their winter store, which was very limited; but were ready to furnish roots in abundance, which they pronounced excellent food. At length, Captain Bonneville

thought of a means of attaining the much-coveted gratification.

He had about him, he says, a trusty plaid, an old and valued travelling companion and comforter upon which the rains had descended, and the snows and winds beaten, without further effect than somewhat to tarnish its primitive lustre. This coat of many colors had excited the admiration, and inflamed the covetousness of both warriors and squaws to an extravagant degree. An idea now occurred to Captain Bonneville, to convert this rainbow garment into the savory viands so much desired. There was a momentary struggle in his mind between old associations and projected indulgence; and his decision in favor of the latter was made, he says, with a greater promptness, perhaps, than true taste and sentiment might have required. In a few moments, his plaid cloak was cut into numerous strips. "Of these," continues he, "with the newly developed talent of a man-milliner, I speedily constructed turbans *à la Turque*, and fanciful head-gears of divers conformations. These, judiciously distributed among such of the womenkind as seemed of most consequence and interest in the eyes of the *patres conscripti*, brought us, in a little while, abundance of dried salmon and deers' hearts; on which we made a sumptuous supper. Another, and a more satisfactory smoke, succeeded this repast, and sweet slumbers answering the peaceful invocation of our pipes, wrapped us in that delicious rest which is only won by toil and travail."

As to Captain Bonneville, he slept in the lodge of the venerable patriarch, who had evidently conceived a most disinterested affection for him, as was shown on the following morning. The travellers, invigorated by a good supper and "fresh from the bath of repose," were about to resume their journey, when this affectionate old chief took the captain aside, to let him know how much he loved him. As a proof of his regard, he had determined to give him a fine horse, which would go further than words, and put his good-will beyond all question. So saying, he made a signal, and forthwith a beautiful young horse of a brown color, was led, prancing and snorting, to the place. Captain Bonneville was suitably affected by this mark of friendship; but his experience in what is proverbially called "Indian giving," made him aware that a parting pledge was necessary on his own part, to prove that his friendship was reciprocated. He accordingly placed a handsome rifle in the hands of the venerable chief, whose benevolent heart was evidently touched and gratified by this outward and visible sign of amity.

Having now, as he thought, balanced this little account of friendship, the captain was about to shift his saddle to this noble gift-horse, when the affectionate patriarch plucked him by the sleeve, and introduced to him a whimpering, whining, leathern-skinned old squaw, that might have passed for an Egyptian mummy without drying. "This," said he, "is my wife: she is a good wife—I love her very much.—She loves the horse—she

loves him a great deal—she will cry very much at losing him.—I do not know how I shall comfort her—and that makes my heart very sore."

What could the worthy captain do, to console the tender-hearted old squaw, and, peradventure, to save the venerable patriarch from a curtain lecture? He bethought himself of a pair of ear-bobs: it was true, the patriarch's better-half was of an age and appearance that seemed to put personal vanity out of the question, but when is personal vanity extinct? The moment he produced the glittering ear-bobs, the whimpering and whining of the sempiternal beldame was at an end. She eagerly placed the precious baubles in her ears, and, though as ugly as the Witch of Endor, went off with a sideling gait, and coquettish air, as though she had been a perfect Semiramis.

The captain had now saddled his newly acquired steed, and his foot was in the stirrup, when the affectionate patriarch again stepped forward, and presented to him a young Pierced-nose, who had a peculiarly sulky look. "This," said the venerable chief, "is my son: he is very good—a great horseman—he always took care of this very fine horse—he brought him up from a colt, and made him what he is.—He is very fond of this fine horse—he loves him like a brother—his heart will be very heavy when this fine horse leaves the camp."

What could the captain do to reward the youthful hope of this venerable pair, and comfort him for the loss

of his foster-brother, the horse? He bethought him of a hatchet, which might be spared from his slender stores. No sooner did he place the implement in the hands of young hopeful, than his countenance brightened up, and he went off rejoicing in his hatchet, to the full as much as did his respectable mother in her ear-bobs.

The captain was now in the saddle, and about to start, when the affectionate old patriarch stepped forward, for the third time, and, while he laid one hand gently on the mane of the horse, held up the rifle in the other. "This rifle," said he, "shall be my great medicine. I will hug it to my heart—I will always love it, for the sake of my good friend, the bald-headed chief. But a rifle, by itself, is dumb—I cannot make it speak. If I had a little powder and ball, I would take it out with me, and would now and then shoot a deer; and when I brought the meat home to my hungry family, I would say—This was killed by the rifle of my friend, the bald-headed chief, to whom I gave that very fine horse."

There was no resisting this appeal: the captain forthwith furnished the coveted supply of powder and ball; but at the same time put spurs to his very fine gift-horse, and the first trial of his speed was to get out of all further manifestation of friendship on the part of the affectionate old patriarch and his insinuating family.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NEZ PERCÉ CAMP.—A CHIEF WITH A HARD NAME.—THE BIG HEARTS OF THE EAST.—HOSPITABLE TREATMENT.—THE INDIAN GUIDES.—MYSTERIOUS COUNCILS.—THE LOQUACIOUS CHIEF.—INDIAN TOMB.—GRAND INDIAN RECEPTION.—AN INDIAN FEAST.—TOWN CRIERS.—HONESTY OF THE NEZ PERCÉS.—THE CAPTAIN'S ATTEMPT AT HEALING.

FOLLOWING the course of the Immahah, Captain Bonneville and his three companions soon reached the vicinity of Snake River. Their route now lay over a succession of steep and isolated hills, with profound valleys. On the second day after taking leave of the affectionate old patriarch, as they were descending into one of those deep and abrupt intervals, they descried a smoke, and shortly afterwards came in sight of a small encampment of Nez Percés.

The Indians, when they ascertained that it was a party of white men approaching, greeted them with a salute of fire-arms, and invited them to encamp. This band was likewise under the sway of a venerable chief named Yo-mus-ro-y-e-cut; a name which we shall be careful not to inflict oftener than is necessary upon the reader. This ancient and hard-named chieftain welcomed Captain Bonneville to his camp with the same hospitality and

loving-kindness that he had experienced from his predecessors. He told the captain that he had often heard of the Americans and their generous deeds, and that his buffalo brethren (the Upper Nez Percés) had always spoken of them as the Big-hearted whites of the East, the very good friends of the Nez Percés.

Captain Bonneville felt somewhat uneasy under the responsibility of this magnanimous but costly appellation; and began to fear he might be involved in a second interchange of pledges of friendship. He hastened, therefore, to let the old chief know his poverty-stricken state, and how little there was to be expected from him.

He informed him that he and his comrades had long resided among the Upper Nez Percés, and loved them so much that they had thrown their arms around them, and now held them close to their hearts. That he had received such good accounts from the Upper Nez Percés of their cousins the Lower Nez Percés, that he had become desirous of knowing them as friends and brothers. That he and his companions had accordingly loaded a mule with presents and set off for the country of the Lower Nez Percés; but, unfortunately, had been entrapped for many days among the snowy mountains; and that the mule with all the presents had fallen into Snake River, and been swept away by the rapid current. That instead, therefore, of arriving among their friends, the Nez Percés, with light hearts and full hands, they came naked, hungry, and broken down; and instead of making them

presents, must depend upon them even for food. "But," concluded he, "we are going to the white men's fort on the Wallah-Wallah, and will soon return; and then we will meet our Nez Percé friends like the true Big Hearts of the East."

Whether the hint thrown out in the latter part of the speech had any effect, or whether the old chief acted from the hospitable feelings which, according to the captain, are really inherent in the Nez Percé tribe, he certainly showed no disposition to relax his friendship on learning the destitute circumstances of his guests. On the contrary, he urged the captain to remain with them until the following day, when he would accompany him on his journey, and make him acquainted with all his people. In the meantime, he would have a colt killed and cut up for travelling provisions. This, he carefully explained, was intended not as an article of traffic, but as a gift; for he saw that his guests were hungry and in need of food.

Captain Bonneville gladly assented to his hospitable arrangement. The carcass of the colt was forthcoming in due season, but the captain insisted that one half of it should be set apart for the use of the chieftain's family.

At an early hour of the following morning, the little party resumed their journey, accompanied by the old chief and an Indian guide. Their route was over a rugged and broken country, where the hills were slippery

with ice and snow. Their horses, too, were so weak and jaded that they could scarcely climb the steep ascents, or maintain their foothold on the frozen declivities. Throughout the whole of the journey, the old chief and the guide were unremitting in their good offices, and continually on the alert to select the best roads, and assist them through all difficulties. Indeed, the captain and his comrades had to be dependent on their Indian friends for almost everything, for they had lost their tobacco and pipes, those great comforts of the trapper, and had but a few charges of powder left, which it was necessary to husband for the purpose of lighting their fires.

In the course of the day the old chief had several private consultations with the guide, and showed evident signs of being occupied with some mysterious matter of mighty import. What it was, Captain Bonneville could not fathom, nor did he make much effort to do so. From some casual sentences that he overheard, he perceived that it was something from which the old man promised himself much satisfaction, and to which he attached a little vainglory, but which he wished to keep a secret; so he suffered him to spin out his petty plans unmolested.

In the evening when they encamped, the old chief and his privy counsellor, the guide, had another mysterious colloquy, after which the guide mounted his horse and departed on some secret mission, while the chief re-

sumed his seat at the fire, and sat humming to himself in a pleasing but mystic reverie.

The next morning, the travellers descended into the valley of the Way-lee-way, a considerable tributary of Snake River. Here they met the guide returning from his secret errand. Another private conference was held between him and the old managing chief, who now seemed more inflated than ever with mystery, and self-importance. Numerous fresh trails, and various other signs, persuaded Captain Bonneville that there must be a considerable village of Nez Percés in the neighborhood; but as his worthy companion, the old chief, said nothing on the subject, and as it appeared to be in some way connected with his secret operations, he asked no questions, but patiently awaited the development of his mystery.

As they journeyed on, they came to where two or three Indians were bathing in a small stream. The good old chief immediately came to a halt, and had a long conversation with them, in the course of which he repeated to them the whole history which Captain Bonneville had related to him. In fact, he seems to have been a very sociable, communicative old man; by no means afflicted with that taciturnity generally charged upon the Indians. On the contrary, he was fond of long talks and long smokings, and evidently was proud of his new friend, the bald-headed chief, and took a pleasure in sounding his praises, and setting forth the power and glory of the Big Hearts of the East.

Having disburdened himself of everything he had to relate to his bathing friends, he left them to their aquatic disports, and proceeded onward with the captain and his companions. As they approached the Way-lee-way, however, the communicative old chief met with another and a very different occasion to exert his colloquial powers. On the banks of the river stood an isolated mound covered with grass. He pointed to it with some emotion. "The big heart and the strong arm," said he, "lie buried beneath that sod."

It was, in fact, the grave of one of his friends, a chosen warrior of the tribe, who had been slain on this spot when in pursuit of a war party of Shoshokoes, who had stolen the horses of the village. The enemy bore off his scalp as a trophy; but his friends found his body in this lonely place, and committed it to the earth with ceremonials characteristic of their pious and reverential feelings. They gathered round the grave and mourned; the warriors were silent in their grief; but the women and children bewailed their loss with loud lamentations. "For three days," said the old man, "we performed the solemn dances for the dead, and prayed the Great Spirit that our brother might be happy in the land of brave warriors and hunters. Then we killed at his grave fifteen of our best and strongest horses, to serve him when he should arrive at the happy hunting ground; and having done all this, we returned sorrowfully to our homes."

While the chief was still talking, an Indian scout came

galloping up, and, presenting him with a powder-horn, wheeled round, and was speedily out of sight. The eyes of the old chief now brightened, and all his self-importance returned. His petty mystery was about to explode. Turning to Captain Bonneville, he pointed to a hill hard by, and informed him that behind it was a village governed by a little chief, whom he had notified of the approach of the bald-headed chief, and a party of the Big Hearts of the East, and that he was prepared to receive them in becoming style. As, among other ceremonials, he intended to salute them with a discharge of fire-arms, he had sent the horn of gunpowder that they might return the salute in a manner correspondent to his dignity.

They now proceeded on until they doubled the point of the hill, when the whole population of the village broke upon their view, drawn out in the most imposing style, and arrayed in all their finery. The effect of the whole was wild and fantastic, yet singularly striking. In the front rank were the chiefs and principal warriors, glaringly painted and decorated; behind them were arranged the rest of the people, men, women, and children.

Captain Bonneville and his party advanced slowly, exchanging salutes of fire-arms. When arrived within a respectful distance, they dismounted. The chiefs then came forward successively, according to their respective characters and consequence, to offer the hand of good-fellowship; each filing off when he had shaken hands, to make way for his successor. Those in the next rank

followed in the same order, and so on, until all had given the pledge of friendship. During all this time, the chief, according to custom, took his stand beside the guests. If any of his people advanced whom he judged unworthy of the friendship or confidence of the white men, he motioned them off by a wave of the hand, and they would submissively walk away. When Captain Bonneville turned upon him an inquiring look, he would observe, "he was a bad man," or something quite as concise, and there was an end of the matter.

Mats, poles, and other materials were now brought, and a comfortable lodge was soon erected for the strangers, where they were kept constantly supplied with wood and water, and other necessaries; and all their effects were placed in safe keeping. Their horses, too, were unsaddled, and turned loose to graze, and a guard set to keep watch upon them.

All this being adjusted, they were conducted to the main building or council house of the village, where an ample repast, or rather banquet, was spread, which seemed to realize all the gastronomical dreams that had tantalized them during their long starvation; for here they beheld not merely fish and roots in abundance, but the flesh of deer and elk, and the choicest pieces of buffalo meat. It is needless to say how vigorously they acquitted themselves on this occasion, and how unnecessary it was for their hosts to practice the usual cramming principle of Indian hospitality.

When the repast was over, a long talk ensued. The chief showed the same curiosity evinced by his tribe generally, to obtain information concerning the United States, of which they knew little but what they derived through their cousins, the Upper Nez Percés; as their traffic is almost exclusively with the British traders of the Hudson's Bay Company. Captain Bonneville did his best to set forth the merits of his nation, and the importance of their friendship to the red men, in which he was ably seconded by his worthy friend, the old chief with the hard name, who did all that he could to glorify the Big Hearts of the East.

The chief, and all present, listened with profound attention, and evidently with great interest; nor were the important facts thus set forth, confined to the audience in the lodge; for sentence after sentence was loudly repeated by a crier for the benefit of the whole village.

This custom of promulgating everything by criers, is not confined to the Nez Percés, but prevails among many other tribes. It has its advantage where there are no gazettes to publish the news of the day, or to report the proceedings of important meetings. And in fact, reports of this kind, viva voce, made in the hearing of all parties, and liable to be contradicted or corrected on the spot, are more likely to convey accurate information to the public mind, than those circulated through the press. The office of crier is generally filled by some old man, who is good for little else. A village has generally sev-

eral of these walking newspapers, as they are termed by the whites, who go about proclaiming the news of the day, giving notice of public councils, expeditions, dances, feasts, and other ceremonials, and advertising anything lost. While Captain Bonneville remained among the Nez Percés, if a glove, handkerchief, or anything of similar value, was lost or mislaid, it was carried by the finder to the lodge of the chief, and proclamation was made by one of their criers, for the owner to come and claim his property.

How difficult it is to get at the true character of these wandering tribes of the wilderness! In a recent work, we have had to speak of this tribe of Indians from the experience of other traders who had casually been among them, and who represented them as selfish, inhospitable, exorbitant in their dealings and much addicted to thieving:* Captain Bonneville, on the contrary, who resided much among them, and had repeated opportunities of ascertaining their real character, invariably speaks of them as kind and hospitable, scrupulously honest, and remarkable, above all other Indians that he had met with, for a strong feeling of religion. In fact, so enthusiastic is he in their praise, that he pronounces them, all ignorant and barbarous as they are by their condition, one of the purest-hearted people on the face of the earth.

Some cures which Captain Bonneville had effected in

* Vide Astoria, chap. lii.

simple cases, among the Upper Nez Percés, had reached the ears of their cousins here, and gained for him the reputation of a great medicine man. He had not been long in the village, therefore, before his lodge began to be the resort of the sick and the infirm. The captain felt the value of the reputation thus accidentally and cheaply acquired, and endeavored to sustain it. As he had arrived at that age when every man is, experimentally, something of a physician, he was enabled to turn to advantage the little knowledge in the healing art which he had casually picked up; and was sufficiently successful in two or three cases, to convince the simple Indians that report had not exaggerated his medical talents. The only patient that effectually baffled his skill, or rather discouraged any attempt at relief, was an antiquated squaw with a church-yard cough, and one leg in the grave; it being shrunk and rendered useless by a rheumatic affection. This was a case beyond his mark; however, he comforted the old woman with a promise that he would endeavor to procure something to relieve her, at the fort on the Wallah-Wallah, and would bring it on his return; with which assurance her husband was so well satisfied, that he presented the captain with a colt, to be killed as provisions for the journey: a medical fee which was thankfully accepted.

While among these Indians, Captain Bonneville unexpectedly found an owner for the horse which he had purchased from a Root Digger at the Big Wyer. The In-

dian satisfactorily proved that the horse had been stolen from him some time previous, by some unknown thief. "However," said the considerate savage, "you got him in fair trade—you are more in want of horses than I am: keep him; he is yours—he is a good horse; use him well."

Thus, in the continual experience of acts of kindness and generosity, which his destitute condition did not allow him to reciprocate, Captain Bonneville passed some short time among these good people, more and more impressed with the general excellence of their character.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SCENERY OF THE WAY-LEE-WAY. — A SUBSTITUTE FOR TOBACCO. — SUBLIME SCENERY OF SNAKE RIVER.—THE GARRULOUS OLD CHIEF AND HIS COUSIN. —A NEZ PERCÉ MEETING.—A STOLEN SKIN.—THE SCAPEGOAT DOG. — MYSTERIOUS CONFERENCES. — THE LITTLE CHIEF. — HIS HOSPITALITY. — THE CAPTAIN'S ACCOUNT OF THE UNITED STATES.—HIS HEALING SKILL.

N resuming his journey, Captain Bonneville was conducted by the same Nez Percé guide, whose knowledge of the country was important in choosing the routes and resting places. He also continued to be accompanied by the worthy old chief with the hard name, who seemed bent upon doing the honors of the country, and introducing him to every branch of his tribe. The Way-lee-way, down the banks of which Captain Bonneville and his companions were now travelling, is a considerable stream winding through a succession of bold and beautiful scenes. Sometimes the landscape towered into bold and mountainous heights that partook of sublimity; at other times, it stretched along the water-side in fresh smiling meadows, and graceful undulating valleys.

Frequently in their route they encountered small parties of the Nez Percés, with whom they invariably stopped

to shake hands; and who, generally, evinced great curiosity concerning them and their adventures; a curiosity which never failed to be thoroughly satisfied by the replies of the worthy Yo-mus-ro-y-e-cut, who kindly took upon himself to be spokesman of the party.

The incessant smoking of pipes incident to the long talks of this excellent, but somewhat garrulous old chief, at length exhausted all his stock of tobacco, so that he had no longer a whiff with which to regale his white companions. In this emergency, he cut up the stem of his pipe into fine shavings, which he mixed with certain herbs, and thus manufactured a temporary succedaneum, to enable him to accompany his long colloquies and harangues with the customary fragrant cloud.

If the scenery of the Way-lee-way had charmed the travellers with its mingled amenity and grandeur, that which broke upon them on once more reaching Snake River, filled them with admiration and astonishment. At times, the river was overhung by dark and stupendous rocks, rising like gigantic walls and battlements; these would be rent by wide and yawning chasms, that seemed to speak of past convulsions of nature. Sometimes the river was of a glassy smoothness and placidity; at other times it roared along in impetuous rapids and foaming cascades. Here, the rocks were piled in the most fantastic crags and precipices; and in another place, they were succeeded by delightful valleys carpeted with green-sward. The whole of this wild and varied scenery

was dominated by immense mountains rearing their distant peaks into the clouds. "The grandeur and originality of the views, presented on every side," says Captain Bonneville, "beggar both the pencil and the pen. Nothing we had ever gazed upon in any other region could for a moment compare in wild majesty and impressive sternness, with the series of scenes which here at every turn astonished our senses, and filled us with awe and delight."

Indeed, from all that we can gather from the journal before us, and the accounts of other travellers, who passed through these regions in the memorable enterprise of Astoria, we are inclined to think that Snake River must be one of the most remarkable for varied and striking scenery of all the rivers of this continent. From its head waters in the Rocky Mountains, to its junction with the Columbia, its windings are upwards of six hundred miles through every variety of landscape. Rising in a volcanic region, amidst extinguished craters, and mountains awful with the traces of ancient fires, it makes its way through great plains of lava and sandy deserts, penetrates vast sierras or mountainous chains, broken into romantic and often frightful precipices, and crowned with eternal snows; and at other times, careers through green and smiling meadows, and wide landscapes of Italian grace and beauty. Wildness and sublimity, however, appear to be its prevailing characteristics.

Captain Bonneville and his companions had pursued

their journey a considerable distance down the course of Snake River, when the old chief halted on the bank, and dismounting, recommended that they should turn their horses loose to graze, while he summoned a cousin of his from a group of lodges on the opposite side of the stream. His summons was quickly answered. An Indian, of an active, elastic form, leaped into a light canoe of cottonwood, and vigorously plying the paddle, soon shot across the river. Bounding on shore, he advanced with a buoyant air and frank demeanor, and gave his right hand to each of the party in turn. The old chief, whose hard name we forbear to repeat, now presented Captain Bonneville, in form, to his cousin, whose name, we regret to say, was no less hard, being nothing less than Hay-she-in-cow-cow. The latter evinced the usual curiosity to know all about the strangers, whence they came, whither they were going, the object of their journey, and the adventures they had experienced. All these, of course, were amply and eloquently set forth by the communicative old chief. To all his grandiloquent account of the bald-headed chief and his countrymen, the Big Hearts of the East, his cousin listened with great attention, and replied in the customary style of Indian welcome. He then desired the party to await his return, and, springing into his canoe, darted across the river. In a little while he returned, bringing a most welcome supply of tobacco, and a small stock of provisions for the road, declaring his intention of accompanying the party. Having no

horse, he mounted behind one of the men, observing that he should procure a steed for himself on the following day.

They all now jogged on very sociably and cheerily together. Not many miles beyond, they met others of the tribe, among whom was one, whom Captain Bonneville and his comrades had known during their residence among the Upper Nez Percés, and who welcomed them with open arms. In this neighborhood was the home of their guide, who took leave of them with a profusion of good wishes for their safety and happiness. That night they put up in the hut of a Nez Percé, where they were visited by several warriors from the other side of the river, friends of the old chief and his cousin, who came to have a talk and a smoke with the white men. The heart of the good old chief was overflowing with good-will at thus being surrounded by his new and old friends, and he talked with more spirit and vivacity than ever. The evening passed away in perfect harmony and good-humor, and it was not until a late hour that the visitors took their leave and recrossed the river.

After this constant picture of worth and virtue on the part of the Nez Percé tribe, we grieve to have to record a circumstance calculated to throw a temporary shade upon the name. In the course of the social and harmonious evening just mentioned, one of the captain's men, who happened to be something of a virtuoso in his way, and fond of collecting curiosities, produced a small skin, a great rarity in the eyes of men conversant in peltries.

It attracted much attention among the visitors from beyond the river, who passed it from one to the other, examined it with looks of lively admiration, and pronounced it a great medicine.

In the morning, when the captain and his party were about to set off, the precious skin was missing. Search was made for it in the hut, but it was nowhere to be found; and it was strongly suspected that it had been purloined by some of the connoisseurs from the other side of the river.

The old chief and his cousin were indignant at the supposed delinquency of their friends across the water, and called out for them to come over and answer for their shameful conduct. The others answered to the call with all the promptitude of perfect innocence, and spurned at the idea of their being capable of such outrage upon any of the Big-hearted nation. All were at a loss on whom to fix the crime of abstracting the invaluable skin, when by chance the eyes of the worthies from beyond the water fell upon an unhappy cur, belonging to the owner of the hut. He was a gallows-looking dog, but not more so than most Indian dogs, who, take them in the mass, are little better than a generation of vipers. Be that as it may, he was instantly accused of having devoured the skin in question. A dog accused is generally a dog condemned; and a dog condemned is generally a dog executed. So was it in the present instance. The unfortunate cur was arraigned; his thievish looks substan-

tiated his guilt, and he was condemned by his judges from across the river to be hanged. In vain the Indians of the hut, with whom he was a great favorite, interceded in his behalf. In vain Captain Bonneville and his comrades petitioned that his life might be spared. His judges were inexorable. He was doubly guilty: first, in having robbed their good friends, the Big Hearts of the East; secondly, in having brought a doubt on the honor of the Nez Percé tribe. He was, accordingly, swung aloft, and pelted with stones to make his death more certain. The sentence of the judges being thoroughly executed, a post-mortem examination of the body of the dog was held, to establish his delinquency beyond all doubt, and to leave the Nez Percés without a shadow of suspicion. Great interest, of course, was manifested by all present, during this operation. The body of the dog was opened, the intestines rigorously scrutinized, but, to the horror of all concerned, not a particle of the skin was to be found—the dog had been unjustly executed!

A great clamor now ensued, but the most clamorous was the party from across the river, whose jealousy of their good name now prompted them to the most vociferous vindications of their innocence. It was with the utmost difficulty that the captain and his comrades could calm their lively sensibilities, by accounting for the disappearance of the skin in a dozen different ways, until all idea of its having been stolen was entirely out of the question.

The meeting now broke up. The warriors returned

across the river, the captain and his comrades proceeded on their journey; but the spirits of the communicative old chief, Yo-mus-ro-y-e-cut, were for a time completely dampened, and he evinced great mortification at what had just occurred. He rode in silence, except, that now and then he would give way to a burst of indignation, and exclaim, with a shake of the head and a toss of the hand toward the opposite shore—"bad men, very bad men across the river;" to each of which brief exclamations, his worthy cousin, Hay-she-in-cow-cow, would respond by a deep guttural sound of acquiescence, equivalent to an amen.

After some time, the countenance of the old chief again cleared up, and he fell into repeated conferences, in an undertone, with his cousin, which ended in the departure of the latter, who, applying the lash to his horse, dashed forward and was soon out of sight. In fact, they were drawing near to the village of another chief, likewise distinguished by an appellation of some longitude, O-push-y-e-cut; but commonly known as the great chief. The cousin had been sent ahead to give notice of their approach; a herald appeared as before, bearing a powder-horn, to enable them to respond to the intended salute. A scene ensued, on their approach to the village, similar to that which had occurred at the village of the little chief. The whole population appeared in the field, drawn up in lines, arrayed with the customary regard to rank and dignity. Then came on the firing of salutes, and the shaking of hands, in which last cere-

monial every individual, man, woman, and child, participated; for the Indians have an idea that it is as indispensable an overture of friendship among the whites as smoking of the pipe is among the red men. The travellers were next ushered to the banquet, where all the choicest viands that the village could furnish, were served up in rich profusion. They were afterwards entertained by feats of agility and horse-races; indeed, their visit to the village seemed the signal for complete festivity. In the meantime, a skin lodge had been spread for their accommodation, their horses and baggage were taken care of, and wood and water supplied in abundance. At night, therefore, they retired to their quarters, to enjoy, as they supposed, the repose of which they stood in need. No such thing, however, was in store for them. A crowd of visitors awaited their appearance, all eager for a smoke and a talk. The pipe was immediately lighted, and constantly replenished and kept alive until the night was far advanced. As usual, the utmost eagerness was evinced by the guests to learn everything within the scope of their comprehension respecting the Americans, for whom they professed the most fraternal regard. The captain, in his replies, made use of familiar illustrations, calculated to strike their minds, and impress them with such an idea of the might of his nation, as would induce them to treat with kindness and respect all stragglers that might fall in their path. To their inquiries as to the numbers of the people of the United

States, he assured them that they were as countless as the blades of grass in the prairies, and that, great as Snake River was, if they were all encamped upon its banks, they would drink it dry in a single day. To these and similar statistics, they listened with profound attention, and apparently, implicit belief. It was, indeed, a striking scene: the captain, with his hunter's dress and bald head in the midst, holding forth, and his wild auditors seated around like so many statues, the fire lighting up their painted faces and muscular figures, all fixed and motionless, excepting when the pipe was passed, a question propounded, or a startling fact in statistics received with a movement of surprise and a half suppressed ejaculation of wonder and delight.

The fame of the captain as a healer of diseases, had accompanied him to this village, and the great chief, O-push-y-e-cut, now entreated him to exert his skill on his daughter, who had been for three days racked with pains, for which the Pierced-nose doctors could devise no alleviation. The captain found her extended on a pallet of mats in excruciating pain. Her father manifested the strongest paternal affection for her, and assured the captain that if he would but cure her, he would place the Americans near his heart. The worthy captain needed no such inducement. His kind heart was already touched by the sufferings of the poor girl, and his sympathies quickened by her appearance; for she was but about sixteen years of age, and uncommonly beautiful in

form and feature. The only difficulty with the captain was, that he knew nothing of her malady, and that his medical science was of the most haphazard kind. After considering and cogitating for some time, as a man is apt to do when in a maze of vague ideas, he made a desperate dash at a remedy. By his directions, the girl was placed in a sort of rude vapor-bath, much used by the Nez Percés, where she was kept until near fainting. He then gave her a dose of gunpowder dissolved in water, and ordered her to be wrapped in buffalo robes and put to sleep under a load of furs and blankets. The remedy succeeded: the next morning she was free from pain, though extremely languid; whereupon, the captain prescribed for her a bowl of colt's head broth, and that she should be kept for a time on simple diet.

The great chief was unbounded in his expressions of gratitude for the recovery of his daughter. He would fain have detained the captain a long time as his guest, but the time for departure had arrived. When the captain's horse was brought for him to mount, the chief declared that the steed was not worthy of him, and sent for one of his best horses, which he presented in its stead; declaring that it made his heart glad to see his friend so well mounted. He then appointed a young Nez Percé to accompany his guests to the next village, and "to carry his talk" concerning them; and the two parties separated with mutual expressions of kindness and feelings of good-will.

The vapor-bath of which we have made mention is in frequent use among the Nez Percé tribe, chiefly for cleanliness. Their sweating-houses, as they call them, are small and close lodges, and the vapor is produced by water poured slowly upon red-hot stones.

On passing the limits of O-push-y-e-cut's domains, the travellers left the elevated table-lands, and all the wild and romantic scenery which has just been described. They now traversed a gently undulating country, of such fertility that it excited the rapturous admiration of two of the captain's followers, a Kentuckian and a native of Ohio. They declared that it surpassed any land that they had ever seen, and often exclaimed, what a delight it would be just to run a plough through such a rich and teeming soil, and see it open its bountiful promise before the share.

Another halt and sojourn of a night was made at the village of a chief named He-mim-el-pilp, where similar ceremonies were observed and hospitality experienced, as at the preceding villages. They now pursued a west-southwest course through a beautiful and fertile region, better wooded than most of the tracts through which they had passed. In their progress, they met with several bands of Nez Percés, by whom they were invariably treated with the utmost kindness. Within seven days after leaving the domain of He-mim-el-pilp, they struck the Columbia River at Fort Wallah-Wallah, where they arrived on the 4th of March, 1834.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FORT WALLAH-WALLAH.—ITS COMMANDER.—INDIANS IN ITS NEIGHBORHOOD.—EXERTIONS OF MR. PAMBRUNE FOR THEIR IMPROVEMENT.—RELIGION.—CODE OF LAWS.—RANGE OF THE LOWER NEZ PERCÉS.—CAMASH, AND OTHER ROOTS.—NEZ PERCÉ HORSES.—PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE.—REFUSAL OF SUPPLIES.—DEPARTURE.—A LAGGARD AND GLUTTON.

FORT Wallah-Wallah is a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, situated just above the mouth of the river of the same name, and on the left bank of the Columbia. It is built of drift-wood, and calculated merely for defense against any attack of the natives. At the time of Captain Bonneville's arrival, the whole garrison mustered but six or eight men; and the post was under the superintendence of Mr. Pambrune, an agent of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The great post and fort of the company, forming the emporium of its trade on the Pacific, is Fort Vancouver; situated on the right bank of the Columbia, about sixty miles from the sea, and just above the mouth of the Wallamut. To this point, the company removed its establishment from Astoria, in 1821, after its coalition with the Northwest Company.

Captain Bonneville and his comrades experienced a

polite reception from Mr. Pambrune, the superintendent: for, however hostile the members of the British Company may be to the enterprises of American traders, they have always manifested great courtesy and hospitality to the traders themselves.

Fort Wallah-Wallah is surrounded by the tribe of the same name, as well as by the Skynses, and the Nez Percés; who bring to it the furs and peltries collected in their hunting expeditions. The Wallah-Wallahs are a degenerate, worn-out tribe. The Nez Percés are the most numerous and tractable of the three tribes just mentioned. Mr. Pambrune informed Captain Bonneville, that he had been at some pains to introduce the Christian religion, in the Roman Catholic form, among them, where it had evidently taken root; but had become altered and modified, to suit their peculiar habits of thought, and motives of action; retaining, however, the principal points of faith, and its entire precepts of morality. The same gentleman had given them a code of laws, to which they conformed with scrupulous fidelity. Polygamy, which once prevailed among them to a great extent, was now rarely indulged. All the crimes denounced by the Christian faith, met with severe punishment among them. Even theft, so venial a crime among the Indians, had recently been punished with hanging, by sentence of a chief.

There certainly appears to be a peculiar susceptibility of moral and religious improvement among this tribe, and

they would seem to be one of the very, very few, that have benefited in morals and manners, by an intercourse with white men. The parties which visited them about twenty years previously, in the expedition fitted out by Mr. Astor, complained of their selfishness, their extortion, and their thievish propensities. The very reverse of those qualities prevailed among them during the prolonged sojourns of Captain Bonneville.

The Lower Nez Percés range upon the Way-lee-way, Immahah, Yenghies, and other of the streams west of the mountains. They hunt the beaver, elk, deer, white bear, and mountain sheep. Beside the flesh of these animals, they use a number of roots for food; some of which would be well worth transplanting and cultivating in the Atlantic States. Among these is the kamash, a sweet root, about the form and size of an onion, and said to be really delicious. The cowish, also, or biscuit root, about the size of a walnut, which they reduce to a very palatable flour, together with the jackap, aisish, quako, and others; which they cook by steaming them in the ground.

In August and September, these Indians keep along the rivers, where they catch and dry great quantities of salmon; which, while they last, are their principal food. In the winter, they congregate in villages formed of comfortable huts, or lodges, covered with mats. They are generally clad in deer-skins, or woolens, and extremely well armed. Above all, they are celebrated for owning

great numbers of horses; which they mark, and then suffer to range in droves in their most fertile plains. These horses are principally of the pony breed; but remarkably stout and long-winded. They are brought in great numbers to the establishments of the Hudson's Bay Company, and sold for a mere trifle.

Such is the account given by Captain Bonneville of the Nez Percés; who, if not viewed by him with too partial an eye, are certainly among the gentlest, and least barbarous people of these remote wildernesses. They invariably signified to him their earnest wish that an American post might be established among them; and repeatedly declared that they would trade with Americans, in preference to any other people.

Captain Bonneville had intended to remain some time in this neighborhood, to form an acquaintance with the natives and to collect information, and establish connections that might be advantageous in the way of trade. The delays, however, which he had experienced on his journey, obliged him to shorten his sojourn, and to set off as soon as possible, so as to reach the rendezvous at the Portneuf at the appointed time. He had seen enough to convince him that an American trade might be carried on with advantage in this quarter; and he determined soon to return with a stronger party, more completely fitted for the purpose.

As he stood in need of some supplies for his journey, he applied to purchase them of Mr. Pambrune; but soon

found the difference between being treated as a guest, or as a rival trader. The worthy superintendent, who had extended to him all the genial rites of hospitality, now suddenly assumed a withered-up aspect and demeanor, and observed that, however he might feel disposed to serve him, personally, he felt bound by his duty to the Hudson's Bay Company, to do nothing which should facilitate or encourage the visits of other traders among the Indians in that part of the country. He endeavored to dissuade Captain Bonneville from returning through the Blue Mountains; assuring him it would be extremely difficult and dangerous, if not impracticable, at this season of the year; and advised him to accompany Mr. Payette, a leader of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was about to depart with a number of men, by a more circuitous, but safe route, to carry supplies to the company's agent, resident among the Upper Nez Percés. Captain Bonneville, however, piqued at his having refused to furnish him with supplies, and doubting the sincerity of his advice, determined to return by the more direct route through the mountains; though varying his course, in some respects, from that by which he had come, in consequence of information gathered among the neighboring Indians.

Accordingly, on the 6th of March, he and his three companions, accompanied by their Nez Percé guides, set out on their return. In the early part of their course, they touched again at several of the Nez Percé villages,

where they had experienced such kind treatment on their way down. They were always welcomed with cordiality; and everything was done to cheer them on their journey.

On leaving the Way-lee-way village, they were joined by a Nez Percé, whose society was welcomed on account of the general gratitude and good-will they felt for his tribe. He soon proved a heavy clog upon the little party, being doltish and taciturn, lazy in the extreme, and a huge feeder. His only proof of intellect was in shrewdly avoiding all labor, and availing himself of the toil of others. When on the march, he always lagged behind the rest, leaving to them the task of breaking a way through all difficulties and impediments, and leisurely and lazily jogging along the track, which they had beaten through the snow. At the evening encampment, when others were busy gathering fuel, providing for the horses, and cooking the evening repast, this worthy Sancho of the wilderness would take his seat quietly and cosily by the fire, puffing away at his pipe, and eying in silence, but with wistful intensity of gaze, the savory morsels roasting for supper.

When meal-time arrived, however, then came his season of activity. He no longer hung back, and waited for others to take the lead, but distinguished himself by a brilliancy of onset, and a sustained vigor and duration of attack, that completely shamed the efforts of his competitors — albeit, experienced trenchermen of no mean

prowess. Never had they witnessed such a power of mastication, and such marvelous capacity of stomach, as in this native and uncultivated gastronome. Having, by repeated and prolonged assaults, at length completely gorged himself, he would wrap himself up, and lie with the torpor of an anaconda, slowly digesting his way on to the next repast.

The gormandizing powers of this worthy were, at first, matters of surprise and merriment to the travellers; but they soon became too serious for a joke, threatening devastation to the flesh-pots; and he was regarded askance, at his meals, as a regular kill-crop, destined to waste the substance of the party. Nothing but a sense of the obligations they were under to his nation, induced them to bear with such a guest; but he proceeded, speedily, to relieve them from the weight of these obligations, by eating a receipt in full.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE UNINVITED GUEST.—FREE AND EASY MANNERS.—SALUTARY JOKES.—A PRODIGAL SON.—EXIT OF THE GLUTTON.—A SUDDEN CHANGE IN FORTUNE.—DANGER OF A VISIT TO POOR RELATIONS.—PLUCKING OF A PROSPEROUS MAN.—A VAGABOND TOILET.—A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE VERY FINE HORSE.—HARD TRAVELLING.—THE UNINVITED GUEST AND THE PATRIARCHAL COLT.—A BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK.—A CATASTROPHE.—EXIT OF THE MERRY VAGABOND.

AS Captain Bonneville and his men were encamped one evening among the hills near Snake River, seated before their fire, enjoying a hearty supper, they were suddenly surprised by the visit of an uninvited guest. He was a ragged, half-naked Indian hunter, armed with bow and arrows, and had the carcass of a fine buck thrown across his shoulder. Advancing with an alert step, and free and easy air, he threw the buck on the ground, and, without waiting for an invitation, seated himself at their mess, helped himself without ceremony, and chatted to the right and left in the liveliest and most unembarrassed manner. No adroit and veteran dinner hunter of a metropolis could have acquitted himself more knowingly. The travellers were at first completely taken by surprise, and could not but admire the facility with which this ragged cosmopo-

lite made himself at home among them. While they stared he went on, making the most of the good cheer upon which he had so fortunately alighted; and was soon elbow deep in "pot luck," and greased from the tip of his nose to the back of his ears.

As the company recovered from their surprise, they began to feel annoyed at this intrusion. Their uninvited guest, unlike the generality of his tribe, was somewhat dirty as well as ragged, and they had no relish for such a messmate. Heaping up, therefore, an abundant portion of the "provant" upon a piece of bark which served for a dish, they invited him to confine himself thereto, instead of foraging in the general mess.

He complied with the most accommodating spirit imaginable; and went on eating and chatting, and laughing and smearing himself, until his whole countenance shone with grease and good-humor. In the course of his repast, his attention was caught by the figure of the gastronome, who, as usual, was gorging himself in dogged silence. A droll cut of the eye showed either that he knew him of old, or perceived at once his characteristics. He immediately made him the butt of his pleasantries; and cracked off two or three good hits, that caused the sluggish dolt to prick up his ears, and delighted all the company. From this time the uninvited guest was taken into favor; his jokes began to be relished; his careless, free and easy air, to be considered singularly amusing; and in the end, he was pronounced by the trav-

ellers one of the merriest companions and most entertaining vagabonds they had met with in the wilderness.

Supper being over, the redoubtable She-wee-she-ouaiter, for such was the simple name by which he announced himself, declared his intention of keeping company with the party for a day or two, if they had no objection; and by way of backing his self-invitation, presented the carcass of the buck as an earnest of his hunting abilities. By this time, he had so completely effaced the unfavorable impression made by his first appearance, that he was made welcome to the camp, and the Nez Percé guide undertook to give him lodging for the night. The next morning, at break of day, he borrowed a gun, and was off among the hills, nor was anything more seen of him until a few minutes after the party had encamped for the evening, when he again made his appearance, in his usual frank, careless manner, and threw down the carcass of another noble deer, which he had borne on his back for a considerable distance.

This evening he was the life of the party, and his open communicative disposition, free from all disguise, soon put them in possession of his history. He had been a kind of prodigal son in his native village; living a loose, heedless life, and disregarding the precepts and imperative commands of the chiefs. He had, in consequence, been expelled from the village, but, in nowise disheartened at this banishment, had betaken himself to the society of the border Indians, and had led a careless, hap-

hazard, vagabond life, perfectly consonant to his humors; heedless of the future, so long as he had wherewithal for the present: and fearing no lack of food, so long as he had the implements of the chase, and a fair hunting ground.

Finding him very expert as a hunter, and being pleased with his eccentricities, and his strange and merry humor, Captain Bonneville fitted him out handsomely as the Nimrod of the party, who all soon became quite attached to him. One of the earliest and most signal services he performed, was to exorcise the insatiate kill-crop, that had hitherto oppressed the party. In fact, the doltish Nez Percé, who had seemed so perfectly insensible to rough treatment of every kind, by which the travellers had endeavored to elbow him out of their society, could not withstand the good-humored bantering, and occasionally sharp wit of She-wee-she. He evidently quailed under his jokes, and sat blinking like an owl in daylight, when pestered by the flouts and peckings of mischievous birds. At length his place was found vacant at meal-time; no one knew when he went off, or whither he had gone, but he was seen no more, and the vast surplus that remained when the repast was over, showed what a mighty gormandizer had departed.

Relieved from this incubus, the little party now went on cheerily. She-wee-she kept them in fun as well as food. His hunting was always successful; he was ever ready to render any assistance in the camp or on the

march; while his jokes, his antics, and the very cut of his countenance, so full of whim and comicality, kept every one in good-humor.

In this way they journeyed on until they arrived on the banks of the Immahah, and encamped near to the Nez Percé lodges. Here She-wee-she took a sudden notion to visit his people, and show off the state of worldly prosperity to which he had so suddenly attained. He accordingly departed in the morning, arrayed in hunter's style, and well appointed with everything befitting his vocation. The buoyancy of his gait, the elasticity of his step, and the hilarity of his countenance, showed that he anticipated, with chuckling satisfaction, the surprise he was about to give those who had ejected him from their society in rags. But what a change was there in his whole appearance when he rejoined the party in the evening! He came skulking into camp like a beaten cur, with his tail between his legs. All his finery was gone; he was naked as when he was born, with the exception of a scanty flap that answered the purpose of a fig-leaf. His fellow-travellers at first did not know him, but supposed it to be some vagrant Root Digger sneaking into the camp; but when they recognized in this forlorn object their prime wag, She-wee-she, whom they had seen depart in the morning in such high glee and high feather, they could not contain their merriment, but hailed him with loud and repeated peals of laughter.

She-wee-she was not of a spirit to be easily cast down; he soon joined in the merriment as heartily as any one, and seemed to consider his reverse of fortune an excellent joke. Captain Bonneville, however, thought proper to check his good-humor, and demanded, with some degree of sternness, the cause of his altered condition. He replied in the most natural and self-complacent style imaginable, "that he had been among his cousins, who were very poor; they had been delighted to see him; still more delighted with his good fortune; they had taken him to their arms; admired his equipments; one had begged for this; another for that"—in fine, what with the poor devil's inherent heedlessness, and the real generosity of his disposition, his needy cousins had succeeded in stripping him of all his clothes and accoutrements, excepting the fig-leaf with which he had returned to camp.

Seeing his total want of care and forethought, Captain Bonneville determined to let him suffer a little, in hopes it might prove a salutary lesson; and, at any rate, to make him no more presents while in the neighborhood of his needy cousins. He was left, therefore, to shift for himself in his naked condition; which, however, did not seem to give him any concern, or to abate one jot of his good-humor. In the course of his lounging about the camp, however, he got possession of a deer-skin; whereupon, cutting a slit in the middle, he thrust his head through it, so that the two ends hung down before and

behind, something like a South American poncho, or the tabard of a herald. These ends he tied together, under the armpits; and thus arrayed, presented himself once more before the captain, with an air of perfect self-satisfaction, as though he thought it impossible for any fault to be found with his toilette.

A little further journeying brought the travellers to the petty village of Nez Percés, governed by the worthy and affectionate old patriarch who had made Captain Bonneville the costly present of the very fine horse. The old man welcomed them once more to his village with his usual cordiality, and his respectable squaw and hopeful son, cherishing grateful recollections of the hatchet and ear-bobs, joined in a chorus of friendly congratulation.

As the much-vaunted steed, once the joy and pride of this interesting family, was now nearly knocked up by travelling, and totally inadequate to the mountain scramble that lay ahead, Captain Bonneville restored him to the venerable patriarch, with renewed acknowledgments for the invaluable gift. Somewhat to his surprise, he was immediately supplied with a fine two years' old colt in his stead, a substitution which, he afterwards learnt, according to Indian custom in such cases, he might have claimed as a matter of right. We do not find that any after claims were made on account of this colt. This donation may be regarded, therefore, as a signal punctilio of Indian honor; but it will be found that the animal soon proved an unlucky acquisition to the party.

While at this village, the Nez Percé guide had held consultations with some of the inhabitants as to the mountain tract the party were about to traverse. He now began to wear an anxious aspect, and to indulge in gloomy forebodings. The snow, he had been told, lay to a great depth in the passes of the mountains, and difficulties would increase as he proceeded. He begged Captain Bonneville, therefore, to travel very slowly, so as to keep the horses in strength and spirit for the hard times they would have to encounter. The captain surrendered the regulation of the march entirely to his discretion, and pushed on in the advance, amusing himself with hunting, so as generally to kill a deer or two in the course of the day, and arriving, before the rest of the party, at the spot designated by the guide for the evening's encampment.

In the meantime, the others plodded on at the heels of the guide, accompanied by that merry vagabond, She-wee-she. The primitive garb worn by this droll, left all his nether man exposed to the biting blasts of the mountains. Still his wit was never frozen, nor his sunshiny temper beclouded; and his innumerable antics and practical jokes, while they quickened the circulation of his own blood, kept his companions in high good-humor.

So passed the first day after the departure from the patriarch's. The second day commenced in the same manner; the captain in the advance, the rest of the party following on slowly. She-wee-she, for the greater part

of the time, trudged on foot over the snow, keeping himself warm by hard exercise, and all kinds of crazy capers. In the height of his foolery, the patriarchal colt, which, unbroken to the saddle, was suffered to follow on at large, happened to come within his reach. In a moment, he was on his back, snapping his fingers, and yelping with delight. The colt, unused to such a burden, and half wild by nature, fell to prancing and rearing and snorting and plunging and kicking; and, at length, set off full speed over the most dangerous ground. As the route led generally along the steep and craggy sides of the hills, both horse and horseman were constantly in danger, and more than once had a hair-breadth escape from deadly peril. Nothing, however, could daunt this madcap savage. He stuck to the colt like a plaster, up ridges, down gullies; whooping and yelling with the wildest glee. Never did beggar on horseback display more headlong horsemanship. His companions followed him with their eyes, sometimes laughing, sometimes holding in their breath at his vagaries, until they saw the colt make a sudden plunge or start, and pitch his unlucky rider headlong over a precipice. There was a general cry of horror, and all hastened to the spot. They found the poor fellow lying among the rocks below, sadly bruised and mangled. It was almost a miracle that he had escaped with life. Even in this condition, his merry spirit was not entirely quelled, and he summoned up a feeble laugh at the alarm and anxiety of those who came

to his relief. He was extricated from his rocky bed, and a messenger dispatched to inform Captain Bonneville of the accident. The latter returned with all speed, and encamped the party at the first convenient spot. Here the wounded man was stretched upon buffalo skins, and the captain, who officiated on all occasions as doctor and surgeon to the party, proceeded to examine his wounds. The principal one was a long and deep gash in the thigh, which reached to the bone. Calling for a needle and thread, the captain now prepared to sew up the wound, admonishing the patient to submit to the operation with becoming fortitude. His gayety was at an end; he could no longer summon up even a forced smile; and, at the first puncture of the needle, flinched so piteously, that the captain was obliged to pause, and to order him a powerful dose of alcohol. This somewhat rallied up his spirit and warmed his heart; all the time of the operation, however, he kept his eyes riveted on the wound, with his teeth set, and a whimsical wincing of the countenance, that occasionally gave his nose something of its usual comic curl.

When the wound was fairly closed, the captain washed it with rum, and administered a second dose of the same to the patient, who was tucked in for the night, and advised to compose himself to sleep. He was restless and uneasy, however; repeatedly expressing his fears that his leg would be so much swollen the next day, as to prevent his proceeding with the party; nor could he be

quieted, until the captain gave a decided opinion favorable to his wishes.

Early the next morning, a gleam of his merry humor returned, on finding that his wounded limb retained its natural proportions. On attempting to use it, however, he found himself unable to stand. He made several efforts to coax himself into a belief that he might still continue forward; but at length, shook his head despondingly, and said, that "as he had but one leg," it was all in vain to attempt a passage of the mountain.

Every one grieved to part with so boon a companion, and under such disastrous circumstances. He was once more clothed and equipped, each one making him some parting present. He was then helped on a horse, which Captain Bonneville presented to him; and after many parting expressions of good-will on both sides, set off on his return to his old haunts; doubtless, to be once more plucked by his affectionate but needy cousins.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE DIFFICULT MOUNTAIN.—A SMOKE AND CONSULTATION.—THE CAPTAIN'S SPEECH.—AN ICY TURNPIKE.—DANGER OF A FALSE STEP.—ARRIVAL ON SNAKE RIVER.—RETURN TO PORTNEUF.—MEETING OF COMRADES.

CONTINUING their journey up the course of the Immahah, the travellers found, as they approached the head waters, the snow increased in quantity, so as to lie two feet deep. They were again obliged, therefore, to beat down a path for their horses, sometimes travelling on the icy surface of the stream. At length they reached the place where they intended to scale the mountain; and, having broken a pathway to the foot, were agreeably surprised to find that the wind had drifted the snow from off the side, so that they attained the summit with but little difficulty. Here they encamped, with the intention of beating a track through the mountains. A short experiment, however, obliged them to give up the attempt, the snow lying in vast drifts, often higher than the horses' heads.

Captain Bonneville now took the two Indian guides, and set out to reconnoitre the neighborhood. Observing a high peak which overtopped the rest, he climbed it,

and discovered from the summit a pass about nine miles long, but so heavily piled with snow, that it seemed impracticable. He now lit a pipe, and, sitting down with the two guides, proceeded to hold a consultation after the Indian mode. For a long while they all smoked vigorously and in silence, pondering over the subject-matter before them. At length a discussion commenced, and the opinion in which the two guides concurred, was, that the horses could not possibly cross the snows. They advised, therefore, that the party should proceed on foot, and they should take the horses back to the village, where they would be well taken care of until Captain Bonneville should send for them. They urged this advice with great earnestness; declaring that their chief would be extremely angry, and treat them severely, should any of the horses of his good friends, the white men, be lost, in crossing under their guidance; and that, therefore, it was good they should not attempt it.

Captain Bonneville sat smoking his pipe, and listening to them with Indian silence and gravity. When they had finished, he replied to them in their own style of language.

"My friends," said he, "I have seen the pass, and have listened to your words; you have little hearts. When troubles and dangers lie in your way, you turn your backs. That is not the way with my nation. When great obstacles present, and threaten to keep them back, their hearts swell, and they push forward. They love to

conquer difficulties. But enough for the present. Night is coming on; let us return to our camp."

He moved on, and they followed in silence. On reaching the camp, he found the men extremely discouraged. One of their number had been surveying the neighborhood, and seriously assured them, that the snow was at least a hundred feet deep. The captain cheered them up, and diffused fresh spirit in them by his example. Still he was much perplexed how to proceed. About dark there was a slight drizzling rain. An expedient now suggested itself. This was to make two light sleds, place the packs on them, and drag them to the other side of the mountain, thus forming a road in the wet snow, which, should it afterwards freeze, would be sufficiently hard to bear the horses. This plan was promptly put into execution; the sleds were constructed, the heavy baggage was drawn backward and forward until the road was beaten, when they desisted from their fatiguing labor. The night turned out clear and cold, and by morning, their road was incrusted with ice sufficiently strong for their purpose. They now set out on their icy turnpike, and got on well enough, excepting that now and then a horse would sidle out of the track, and immediately sink up to the neck. Then came on toil and difficulty, and they would be obliged to haul up the floundering animal with ropes. One, more unlucky than the rest, after repeated falls, had to be abandoned in the snow. Notwithstanding these repeated delays, they suc-

ceeded, before the sun had acquired sufficient power to thaw the snow, in getting all the rest of their horses safely to the other side of the mountain.

Their difficulties and dangers, however, were not yet at an end. They had now to descend, and the whole surface of the snow was glazed with ice. It was necessary, therefore, to wait until the warmth of the sun should melt the glassy crust of sleet, and give them a foothold in the yielding snow. They had a frightful warning of the danger of any movement while the sleet remained. A wild young mare, in her restlessness, strayed to the edge of the declivity. One slip was fatal to her; she lost her balance, careered with headlong velocity down the slippery side of the mountain for more than two thousand feet, and was dashed to pieces at the bottom. When the travellers afterwards sought the carcass to cut it up for food, they found it torn and mangled in the most horrible manner.

It was quite late in the evening before the party descended to the ultimate skirts of the snow. Here they planted large logs below them to prevent their sliding down, and encamped for the night. The next day they succeeded in bringing down their baggage to the encampment; then packing all up regularly and loading their horses, they once more set out briskly and cheerfully, and in the course of the following day succeeded in getting to a grassy region.

Here their Nez Percé guides declared that all the dif-

ficulties of the mountains were at an end, and their course was plain and simple, and needed no further guidance; they asked leave, therefore, to return home. This was readily granted, with many thanks and presents for their faithful services. They took a long farewell smoke with their white friends, after which, they mounted their horses and set off, exchanging many farewells and kind wishes.

On the following day, Captain Bonneville completed his journey down the mountain, and encamped on the borders of Snake River, where he found the grass in great abundance and eight inches in height. In this neighborhood, he saw on the rocky banks of the river several prismoids of basaltes, rising to the height of fifty or sixty feet.

Nothing particularly worthy of note occurred during several days as the party proceeded up along Snake River and across its tributary streams. After crossing Gun Creek, they met with various signs that white people were in the neighborhood, and Captain Bonneville made earnest exertions to discover whether they were any of his own people, that he might join them. He soon ascertained that they had been starved out of this tract of country, and had betaken themselves to the buffalo region, whither he now shaped his course. In proceeding along Snake River, he found small hordes of Shoshonies lingering upon the minor streams, and living upon trout and other fish, which they catch in great num-

bers at this season in fish-traps. The greater part of the tribe, however, had penetrated the mountains to hunt the elk, deer, and ahsahto or bighorn.

On the 12th of May, Captain Bonneville reached the Portneuf River, in the vicinity of which he had left the winter encampment of his company on the preceding Christmas day. He had then expected to be back by the beginning of March, but circumstances had detained him upwards of two months beyond the time, and the winter encampment must long ere this have been broken up. Halting on the banks of the Portneuf, he dispatched scouts a few miles above, to visit the old camping ground and search for signals of the party, or of their whereabouts, should they actually have abandoned the spot. They returned without being able to ascertain anything.

Being now destitute of provisions, the travellers found it necessary to make a short hunting excursion after buffalo. They made caches, therefore, in an island in the river, in which they deposited all their baggage, and then set out on their expedition. They were so fortunate as to kill a couple of fine bulls, and cutting up the carcasses, determined to husband this stock of provisions with the most miserly care, lest they should again be obliged to venture into the open and dangerous hunting grounds. Returning to their island on the 18th of May, they found that the wolves had been at the caches, scratched up the contents, and scattered them in every direction. They now constructed a more secure one, in which they de-

posited their heaviest articles, and then descended Snake River again, and encamped just above the American Falls. Here they proceeded to fortify themselves, intending to remain here, and give their horses an opportunity to recruit their strength with good pasturage, until it should be time to set out for the annual rendezvous in Bear River Valley.

On the 1st of June they descried four men on the other side of the river, opposite to the camp, and, having attracted their attention by a discharge of rifles, ascertained to their joy that they were some of their own people. From these men Captain Bonneville learnt that the whole party which he had left in the preceding month of December, were encamped on Blackfoot River, a tributary of Snake River, not very far above the Portneuf. Thither he proceeded with all possible dispatch, and in a little while had the pleasure of finding himself once more surrounded by his people, who greeted his return among them in the heartiest manner; for his long-protracted absence had convinced them that he and his three companions had been cut off by some hostile tribe.

The party had suffered much during his absence. They had been pinched by famine and almost starved, and had been forced to repair to the caches at Salmon River. Here they fell in with the Blackfeet bands, and considered themselves fortunate in being able to retreat from the dangerous neighborhood without sustaining any loss.

Being thus reunited, a general treat from Captain Bonneville to his men was a matter of course. Two days, therefore, were given up to such feasting and merriment as their means and situation afforded. What was wanting in good cheer was made up in good-will; the free trappers in particular, distinguished themselves on the occasion, and the saturnalia was enjoyed with a hearty holiday spirit, that smacked of the game flavor of the wilderness.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DEPARTURE FOR THE RENDEZVOUS.—A WAR PARTY OF BLACKFEET.—A MOCK BUSTLE.—SHAM FIRES AT NIGHT.—WARLIKE PRECAUTIONS.—DANGERS OF A NIGHT ATTACK.—A PANIC AMONG HORSES.—CAUTIOUS MARCH.—THE BEER SPRINGS.—A MOCK CAROUSAL.—SKIRMISHING WITH BUFFALOES.—A BUFFALO BAIT.—ARRIVAL AT THE RENDEZVOUS.—MEETING OF VARIOUS BANDS.

FTER the two days of festive indulgence, Captain Bonneville broke up the encampment, and set out with his motley crew of hired and free trappers, half-breeds, Indians, and squaws, for the main rendezvous in Bear River Valley. Directing his course up the Blackfoot River, he soon reached the hills among which it takes its rise. Here, while on the march, he descried from the brow of a hill, a war party of about sixty Blackfeet, on the plain immediately below him. His situation was perilous; for the greater part of his people were dispersed in various directions. Still, to betray hesitation or fear, would be to discover his actual weakness, and to invite attack. He assumed, instantly, therefore, a belligerent tone; ordered the squaws to lead the horses to a small grove of ashen trees, and unload and tie them; and caused a great bustle to be made by

his scanty handful; the leaders riding hither and thither, and vociferating with all their might, as if a numerous force were getting under way for an attack.

To keep up the deception as to his force, he ordered, at night, a number of extra fires to be made in his camp, and kept up a vigilant watch. His men were all directed to keep themselves prepared for instant action. In such cases the experienced trapper sleeps in his clothes, with his rifle beside him, the shot-belt and powder-flask on the stock; so that, in case of alarm, he can lay his hand upon the whole of his equipment at once, and start up, completely armed.

Captain Bonneville was also especially careful to secure the horses, and set a vigilant guard upon them; for there lies the great object and principal danger of a night attack. The grand move of the lurking savage is to cause a panic among the horses. In such cases one horse frightens another, until all are alarmed, and struggle to break loose. In camps where there are great numbers of Indians, with their horses, a night alarm of the kind is tremendous. The running of the horses that have broken loose; the snorting, stamping, and rearing of those which remain fast; the howling of dogs; the yelling of Indians; the scampering of white men, and red men, with their guns; the overturning of lodges, and trampling of fires by the horses; the flashes of the fires, lighting up forms of men and steeds dashing through the gloom, altogether make up one of the wildest scenes of

confusion imaginable. In this way, sometimes, all the horses of a camp, amounting to several hundred, will be frightened off in a single night.

The night passed off without any disturbance; but there was no likelihood that a war party of Blackfeet, once on the track of a camp where there was a chance for spoils, would fail to hover round it. The captain, therefore, continued to maintain the most vigilant precautions; throwing out scouts in the advance, and on every rising ground.

In the course of the day he arrived at the plain of white clay, already mentioned, surrounded by the mineral springs, called Beer Springs by the trappers.* Here the men all halted to have a regale. In a few moments every spring had its jovial knot of hard drinkers, with tin cup in hand, indulging in a mock carouse; quaffing, pledging, toasting, bandying jokes, singing drinking songs, and uttering peals of laughter, until it seemed as if their imaginations had given potency to the beverage,

* In a manuscript journal of Mr. Nathaniel G. Wyeth, we find the following mention of this watering-place:

"There is here a soda spring; or, I may say, fifty of them. These springs throw out lime, which deposits and forms little hillocks of a yellowish colored stone. There is, also, here, a warm spring, which throws out water with a jet; which is like bilge-water in taste. There are, also, here, peat beds, which sometimes take fire, and leave behind a deep, light ashes; in which animals sink deep. . . . I ascended a mountain, and from it could see that Bear River took a short turn round Sheep Rock. There were, in the plain, many hundred mounds of yellowish stone, with a crater on the top, formed of the deposits of the impregnated water."

and cheated them into a fit of intoxication. Indeed, in the excitement of the moment, they were loud and extravagant in their commendations of "the mountain tap;" elevating it above every beverage produced from hops or malt. It was a singular and fantastic scene; suited to a region where everything is strange and peculiar:—These groups of trappers, and hunters, and Indians, with their wild costumes, and wilder countenances; their boisterous gayety, and reckless air; quaffing, and making merry round these sparkling fountains; while beside them lay their weapons, ready to be snatched up for instant service. Painters are fond of representing banditti at their rude and picturesque carousals; but here were groups, still more rude and picturesque; and it needed but a sudden onset of Blackfeet, and a quick transition from a fantastic revel to a furious mêlée, to have rendered this picture of a trapper's life complete.

The beer frolic, however, passed off without any untoward circumstances; and, unlike most drinking bouts, left neither headache nor heartache behind. Captain Bonneville now directed his course up along Bear River; amusing himself, occasionally, with hunting the buffalo, with which the country was covered. Sometimes, when he saw a huge bull taking his repose on a prairie, he would steal along a ravine, until close upon him; then rouse him from his meditations with a pebble, and take a shot at him as he started up. Such is the quickness with which this animal springs upon his legs, that it is

not easy to discover the muscular process by which it is effected. The horse rises first upon his fore legs; and the domestic cow upon her hinder limbs; but the buffalo bounds at once from a couchant to an erect position, with a celerity that baffles the eye. Though from his bulk, and rolling gait, he does not appear to run with much swiftness; yet, it takes a stanch horse to overtake him, when at full speed on level ground; and a buffalo cow is still fleeter in her motion.

Among the Indians and half-breeds of the party, were several admirable horsemen and bold hunters; who amused themselves with a grotesque kind of buffalo bait. Whenever they found a huge bull in the plains, they prepared for their teasing and barbarous sport. Surrounding him on horseback, they would discharge their arrows at him in quick succession, goading him to make an attack; which, with a dexterous movement of the horse, they would easily avoid. In this way they hovered round him, feathering him with arrows, as he reared and plunged about, until he was bristled all over like a porcupine. When they perceived in him signs of exhaustion, and he could no longer be provoked to make battle, they would dismount from their horses, approach him in the rear, and seizing him by the tail, jerk him from side to side, and drag him backwards; until the frantic animal, gathering fresh strength from fury, would break from them, and rush, with flashing eyes and a hoarse bellowing, upon any enemy in sight; but in a

little while, his transient excitement at an end, would pitch headlong on the ground, and expire. The arrows were then plucked forth, the tongue cut out and preserved as a dainty, and the carcass left a banquet for the wolves.

Pursuing his course up Bear River, Captain Bonneville arrived, on the 13th of June, at the Little Snake Lake; where he encamped for four or five days, that he might examine its shores and outlets. The latter, he found extremely muddy, and so surrounded by swamps and quagmires, that he was obliged to construct canoes of rushes, with which to explore them. The mouths of all the streams which fall into this lake from the west, are marshy and inconsiderable; but on the east side, there is a beautiful beach, broken, occasionally, by high and isolated bluffs, which advance upon the lake, and heighten the character of the scenery. The water is very shallow, but abounds with trout, and other small fish.

Having finished his survey of the lake, Captain Bonneville proceeded on his journey, until on the banks of the Bear River, some distance higher up, he came upon the party which he had detached a year before, to circumambulate the Great Salt Lake, and ascertain its extent, and the nature of its shores. They had been encamped here about twenty days; and were greatly rejoiced at meeting once more with their comrades, from whom they had so long been separated. The first inquiry of Cap-

tain Bonneville was about the result of their journey, and the information they had procured as to the Great Salt Lake; the object of his intense curiosity and ambition. The substance of their report will be found in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PLAN OF THE SALT LAKE EXPEDITION.—GREAT SANDY DESERTS.—SUFFERINGS FROM THIRST.—OGDEN'S RIVER.—TRAILS AND SMOKE OF LURKING SAVAGES.—THEFTS AT NIGHT.—A TRAPPER'S REVENGE.—ALARMS OF A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.—A MURDEROUS VICTORY.—CALIFORNIAN MOUNTAINS.—PLAINS ALONG THE PACIFIC.—ARRIVAL AT MONTEREY—ACCOUNT OF THE PLACE AND NEIGHBORHOOD.—LOWER CALIFORNIA—ITS EXTENT.—THE PENINSULA—SOIL—CLIMATE—PRODUCTION.—ITS SETTLEMENT BY THE JESUITS—THEIR SWAY OVER THE INDIANS—THEIR EXPULSION.—RUINS OF A MISSIONARY ESTABLISHMENT.—SUBLIME SCENERY.—UPPER CALIFORNIA.—MISSIONS—THEIR POWER AND POLICY.—RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY.—DESIGNS OF FOREIGN NATIONS.

IT was on the 24th of July, in the preceding year (1833), that the brigade of forty men set out from the Green River Valley, to explore the Great Salt Lake. They were to make the complete circuit of it, trapping on all the streams which should fall in their way, and to keep journals and make charts, calculated to impart a knowledge of the lake and the surrounding country. All the resources of Captain Bonneville had been tasked to fit out this favorite expedition. The country lying to the southwest of the mountains, and ranging down to California, was as yet almost unknown; being out of the buffalo range, it was untraversed

by the trapper, who preferred those parts of the wilderness where the roaming herds of that species of animal gave him comparatively an abundant and luxurious life. Still it was said the deer, the elk, and the bighorn were to be found there, so that, with a little diligence and economy, there was no danger of lacking food. As a precaution, however, the party halted on Bear River and hunted for a few days, until they had laid in a supply of dried buffalo meat and venison; they then passed by the head waters of the Cassie River, and soon found themselves launched on an immense sandy desert. Southwardly, on their left, they beheld the Great Salt Lake, spread out like a sea, but they found no stream running into it. A desert extended around them, and stretched to the southwest, as far as the eye could reach, rivalling the deserts of Asia and Africa in sterility. There was neither tree nor herbage, nor spring, nor pool, nor running stream, nothing but parched wastes of sand, where horse and rider were in danger of perishing.

Their sufferings, at length, became so great that they abandoned their intended course, and made towards a range of snowy mountains, brightening in the north, where they hoped to find water. After a time, they came upon a small stream leading directly towards these mountains. Having quenched their burning thirst, and refreshed themselves and their weary horses for a time, they kept along this stream, which gradually increased in size, being fed by numerous brooks. After approaching

the mountains, it took a sweep towards the southwest, and the travellers still kept along it, trapping beaver as they went, on the flesh of which they subsisted for the present, husbanding their dried meat for future necessities.

The stream on which they had thus fallen is called by some, Mary River, but is more generally known as Ogden's River, from Mr. Peter Ogden, an enterprising and intrepid leader of the Hudson's Bay Company, who first explored it. The wild and half-desert region through which the travellers were passing, is wandered over by hordes of Shoshokoes, or Root Diggers, the forlorn branch of the Snake tribe. They are a shy people, prone to keep aloof from the stranger. The travellers frequently met with their trails, and saw the smoke of their fires rising in various parts of the vast landscape, so that they knew there were great numbers in the neighborhood, but scarcely ever were any of them to be met with.

After a time, they began to have vexatious proofs that, if the Shoshokoes were quiet by day, they were busy at night. The camp was dogged by these eavesdroppers; scarce a morning, but various articles were missing, yet nothing could be seen of the marauders. What particularly exasperated the hunters, was to have their traps stolen from the streams. One morning, a trapper of a violent and savage character, discovering that his traps had been carried off in the night, took a horrid oath to kill the first Indian he should meet, innocent or guilty.

As he was returning with his comrades to camp, he beheld two unfortunate Diggers, seated on the river bank, fishing. Advancing upon them, he levelled his rifle, shot one upon the spot, and flung his bleeding body into the stream. The other Indian fled, and was suffered to escape. Such is the indifference with which acts of violence are regarded in the wilderness, and such the immunity an armed ruffian enjoys beyond the barriers of the laws, that the only punishment this desperado met with, was a rebuke from the leader of the party.

The trappers now left the scene of this infamous tragedy, and kept on westward, down the course of the river, which wound along with a range of mountains on the right hand, and a sandy, but somewhat fertile plain, on the left. As they proceeded, they beheld columns of smoke rising, as before, in various directions, which their guilty consciences now converted into alarm signals, to arouse the country, and collect the scattered bands for vengeance.

After a time, the natives began to make their appearance, and sometimes in considerable numbers, but always pacific; the trappers, however, suspected them of deep-laid plans to draw them into ambuscades; to crowd into and get possession of their camp, and various other crafty and daring conspiracies, which, it is probable, never entered into the heads of the poor savages. In fact, they are a simple, timid, inoffensive race, unpracticed in warfare, and scarce provided with any weapons,

excepting for the chase. Their lives are passed in the great sand plains and along the adjacent rivers; they subsist sometimes on fish, at other times on roots and the seeds of a plant, called the cat's-tail. They are of the same kind of people that Captain Bonneville found upon Snake River, and whom he found so mild and inoffensive.

The trappers, however, had persuaded themselves that they were making their way through a hostile country, and that implacable foes hung round their camp or beset their path, watching for an opportunity to surprise them. At length, one day they came to the banks of a stream emptying into Ogden's River, which they were obliged to ford. Here a great number of Shoshokoes were posted on the opposite bank. Persuaded they were there with hostile intent, they advanced upon them, levelled their rifles, and killed twenty-five of them upon the spot. The rest fled to a short distance, then halted and turned about, howling and whining like wolves, and uttering the most piteous wailings. The trappers chased them in every direction; the poor wretches made no defense, but fled with terror; neither does it appear from the accounts of the boasted victors, that a weapon had been wielded or a weapon launched by the Indians throughout the affair. We feel perfectly convinced that the poor savages had no hostile intention, but had merely gathered together through motives of curiosity, as others of their tribe had done when Captain Bonneville and his companions passed along Snake River.

The trappers continued down Ogden's River, until they ascertained that it lost itself in a great swampy lake, to which there was no apparent discharge. They then struck directly westward, across the great chain of Californian mountains intervening between these interior plains and the shores of the Pacific.

For three and twenty days they were entangled among these mountains, the peaks and ridges of which are in many places covered with perpetual snow. Their passes and defiles present the wildest scenery, partaking of the sublime rather than the beautiful, and abounding with frightful precipices. The sufferings of the travellers among these savage mountains were extreme: for a part of the time they were nearly starved; at length, they made their way through them, and came down upon the plains of New California, a fertile region extending along the coast, with magnificent forests, verdant savannas, and prairies that look like stately parks. Here they found deer and other game in abundance, and indemnified themselves for past famine. They now turned towards the south, and passing numerous small bands of natives, posted upon various streams, arrived at the Spanish village and post of Monterey.

This is a small place, containing about two hundred houses, situated in latitude 37° north. It has a capacious bay, with indifferent anchorage. The surrounding country is extremely fertile, especially in the valleys; the soil is richer, the further you penetrate into the interior, and

the climate is described as a perpetual spring. Indeed, all California, extending along the Pacific Ocean from latitude 19° 30′ to 42° north, is represented as one of the most fertile and beautiful regions in North America.

Lower California, in length about seven hundred miles, forms a great peninsula, which crosses the tropics and terminates in the torrid zone. It is separated from the mainland by the Gulf of California, sometimes called the Vermilion Sea; into this gulf empties the Colorado of the West, the Seeds-ke-dee, or Green River, as it is also sometimes called. The peninsula is traversed by stern and barren mountains, and has many sandy plains, where the only sign of vegetation is the cylindrical cactus growing among the clefts of the rocks. Wherever there is water, however, and vegetable mould, the ardent nature of the climate quickens everything into astonishing fertility. There are valleys luxuriant with the rich and beautiful productions of the tropics. There the sugar-cane and indigo plant attain a perfection unequalled in any other part of North America. There flourish the olive, the fig, the date, the orange, the citron, the pomegranate, and other fruits belonging to the voluptuous climates of the south; with grapes in abundance, that yield a generous wine. In the interior are salt plains; silver mines and scanty veins of gold are said, likewise, to exist; and pearls of a beautiful water are to be fished upon the coast.

The peninsula of California was settled in 1698, by

the Jesuits, who, certainly, as far as the natives were concerned, have generally proved the most beneficent of colonists. In the present instance, they gained and maintained a footing in the country without the aid of military force, but solely by religious influence. They formed a treaty, and entered into the most amicable relations with the natives, then numbering from twenty-five to thirty thousand souls, and gained a hold upon their affections, and a control over their minds, that effected a complete change in their condition. They built eleven missionary establishments in the various valleys of the peninsula, which formed rallying places for the surrounding savages, where they gathered together as sheep into the fold, and surrendered themselves and their consciences into the hands of these spiritual pastors. Nothing, we are told, could exceed the implicit and affectionate devotion of the Indian converts to the Jesuit fathers, and the Catholic faith was disseminated widely through the wilderness.

The growing power and influence of the Jesuits in the New World, at length excited the jealousy of the Spanish government, and they were banished from the colonies. The governor, who arrived at California to expel them, and to take charge of the country, expected to find a rich and powerful fraternity, with immense treasures hoarded in their missions, and an army of Indians ready to defend them. On the contrary, he beheld a few venerable silver-haired priests coming humbly forward to meet him, fol-

lowed by a throng of weeping, but submissive natives. The heart of the governor, it is said, was so touched by this unexpected sight, that he shed tears; but he had to execute his orders. The Jesuits were accompanied to the place of their embarkation by their simple and affectionate parishioners, who took leave of them with tears and sobs. Many of the latter abandoned their hereditary abodes, and wandered off to join their southern brethren, so that but a remnant remained in the peninsula. The Franciscans immediately succeeded the Jesuits, and subsequently the Dominicans; but the latter managed their affairs ill. But two of the missionary establishments are at present occupied by priests; the rest are all in ruins, excepting one, which remains a monument of the former power and prosperity of the order. This is a noble edifice, once the seat of the chief of the resident Jesuits. It is situated in a beautiful valley, about half way between the Gulf of California and the broad ocean, the peninsula being here about sixty miles wide. The edifice is of hewn stone, one story high, two hundred and ten feet in front, and about fifty-five feet deep. The walls are six feet thick, and sixteen feet high, with a vaulted roof of stone, about two feet and a half in thickness. It is now abandoned and desolate: the beautiful valley is without an inhabitant—not a human being resides within thirty miles of the place!

In approaching this deserted mission house from the south, the traveller passes over the mountain of San

Juan, supposed to be the highest peak in the Californias. From this lofty eminence, a vast and magnificent prospect unfolds itself; the great Gulf of California, with the dark blue sea beyond, studded with islands; and in another direction, the immense lava plain of San Gabriel. The splendor of the climate gives an Italian effect to the immense prospect. The sky is of a deep blue color, and the sunsets are often magnificent beyond description. Such is a slight and imperfect sketch of this remarkable peninsula.

Upper California extends from latitude 31° 10′ to 42° on the Pacific, and inland, to the great chain of snow-capped mountains which divide it from the sand plains of the interior. There are about twenty-one missions in this province, most of which were established about fifty years since, and are generally under the care of the Franciscans. These exert a protecting sway over about thirty-five thousand Indian converts, who reside on the lands around the mission houses. Each of these houses has fifteen miles square of land allotted to it, subdivided into small lots, proportioned to the number of Indian converts attached to the mission. Some are inclosed with high walls; but in general they are open hamlets, composed of rows of huts, built of sunburnt bricks; in some instances whitewashed and roofed with tiles. Many of them are far in the interior, beyond the reach of all military protection, and dependent entirely on the good-will of the natives, which never fails them.

They have made considerable progress in teaching the Indians the useful arts. There are native tanners, shoemakers, weavers, blacksmiths, stonecutters, and other artificers attached to each establishment. Others are taught husbandry, and the rearing of cattle and horses; while the females card and spin wool, weave, and perform the other duties allotted to their sex in civilized life. No social intercourse is allowed between the unmarried of the opposite sexes after working hours; and at night they are locked up in separate apartments, and the keys delivered to the priests.

The produce of the lands, and all the profits arising from sales, are entirely at the disposal of the priests; whatever is not required for the support of the mission, goes to augment a fund which is under their control. Hides and tallow constitute the principal riches of the missions, and, indeed, the main commerce of the country. Grain might be produced to an unlimited extent at the establishments, were there a sufficient market for it. Olives and grapes are also reared at the missions.

Horses and horned cattle abound throughout all this region; the former may be purchased at from three to five dollars, but they are of an inferior breed. Mules, which are here of a large size and of valuable qualities, cost from seven to ten dollars.

There are several excellent ports along this coast. San Diego, Santa Barbara, Monterey, the Bay of San Francisco, and the northern port of Bondago; all afford

anchorage for ships of the largest class. The port of San Francisco is too well known to require much notice in this place. The entrance from the sea is sixty-seven fathoms deep, and within, whole navies might ride with perfect safety. Two large rivers, which take their rise in mountains two or three hundred miles to the east, and run through a country unsurpassed for soil and climate, empty themselves into the harbor. The country around affords admirable timber for ship-building. In a word, this favored port combines advantages which not only fit it for a grand naval depot, but almost render it capable of being made the dominant military post of these seas.

Such is a feeble outline of the Californian coast and country, the value of which is more and more attracting the attention of naval powers. The Russians have always a ship of war upon this station, and have already encroached upon the Californian boundaries, by taking possession of the port of Bondago, and fortifying it with several guns. Recent surveys have likewise been made, both by the Russians and the English, and we have little doubt, that, at no very distant day, this neglected, and, until recently, almost unknown region, will be found to possess sources of wealth sufficient to sustain a powerful and prosperous empire. Its inhabitants, themselves, are but little aware of its real riches; they have not enterprise sufficient to acquaint themselves with a vast interior that lies almost a terra incognita; nor have they

the skill and industry to cultivate properly the fertile tracts along the coast; nor to prosecute that foreign commerce which brings all the resources of a country into profitable action.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

GAY LIFE AT MONTEREY.—MEXICAN HORSEMEN.—A BOLD DRAGOON.—USE OF THE LASSO.—VAQUEROS.—NOOSING A BEAR.—FIGHT BETWEEN A BULL AND A BEAR.—DEPARTURE FROM MONTEREY.—INDIAN HORSE-STEALERS.—OUTRAGES COMMITTED BY THE TRAVELLERS.—INDIGNATION OF CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE.

THE wandering band of trappers were well received at Monterey: the inhabitants were desirous of retaining them among them, and offered extravagant wages to such as were acquainted with any mechanic art. When they went into the country, too, they were kindly treated by the priests at the mission; who are always hospitable to strangers, whatever may be their rank or religion. They had no lack of provisions; being permitted to kill as many as they pleased of the vast herds of cattle that graze the country, on condition, merely, of rendering the hides to the owners. They attended bull-fights and horse-races; forgot all the purposes of their expedition; squandered away, freely, the property that did not belong to them; and, in a word, reveled in a perfect fool's paradise.

What especially delighted them, was the equestrian skill of the Californians. The vast number and the cheap-

ness of the horses in this country, makes every one a cavalier. The Mexicans and half-breeds of California, spend the greater part of their time in the saddle. They are fearless riders; and their daring feats upon unbroken colts and wild horses, astonished our trappers; though accustomed to the bold riders of the prairies.

A Mexican horseman has much resemblance, in many points, to the equestrians of Old Spain; and especially to the vainglorious Caballero of Andalusia. A Mexican dragoon, for instance, is represented as arrayed in a round blue jacket, with red cuffs and collar; blue velvet breeches, unbuttoned at the knees to show his white stockings; bottinas of deer-skin; a round-crowned Andalusian hat, and his hair cued. On the pommel of his saddle, he carries balanced a long musket, with fox-skin round the lock. He is cased in a cuirass of double-fold deer-skin, and carries a bull's hide shield; he is forked in a Moorish saddle, high before and behind; his feet are thrust into wooden box stirrups, of Moorish fashion, and a tremendous pair of iron spurs, fastened by chains, jingle at his heels. Thus equipped, and suitably mounted, he considers himself the glory of California, and the terror of the universe.

The Californian horsemen seldom ride out without the lasso; that is to say, a long coil of cord, with a slip noose; with which they are expert, almost to a miracle. The lasso, now almost entirely confined to Spanish America, is said to be of great antiquity; and to have

come, originally, from the East. It was used, we are told, by a pastoral people of Persian descent; of whom eight thousand accompanied the army of Xerxes. By the Spanish Americans, it is used for a variety of purposes; and among others, for hauling wood. Without dismounting, they cast the noose round a log, and thus drag it to their houses. The vaqueros, or Indian cattle drivers, have also learnt the use of the lasso from the Spaniards; and employ it to catch the half-wild cattle, by throwing it round their horns.

The lasso is also of great use in furnishing the public with a favorite, though barbarous sport; the combat between a bear and a wild bull. For this purpose, three or four horsemen sally forth to some wood, frequented by bears, and, depositing the carcass of a bullock, hide themselves in the vicinity. The bears are soon attracted by the bait. As soon as one, fit for their purpose, makes his appearance, they run out, and with the lasso, dexterously noose him by either leg. After dragging him at full speed until he is fatigued, they secure him more effectually; and tying him on the carcass of the bullock, draw him in triumph to the scene of action. By this time, he is exasperated to such frenzy, that they are sometimes obliged to throw cold water on him, to moderate his fury; and dangerous would it be, for horse or rider, were he, while in this paroxysm, to break his bonds.

A wild bull, of the fiercest kind, which has been caught and exasperated in the same manner, is now produced,

and both animals are turned loose in the arena of a small amphitheatre. The mortal fight begins instantly; and always, at first, to the disadvantage of Bruin; fatigued, as he is, by his previous rough riding. Roused, at length, by the repeated goring of the bull, he seizes his muzzle with his sharp claws, and clinging to this most sensitive part, causes him to bellow with rage and agony. In his heat and fury, the bull lolls out his tongue; this is instantly clutched by the bear; with a desperate effort he overturns his huge antagonist; and then dispatches him without difficulty.

Beside this diversion, the travellers were likewise regaled with bull-fights, in the genuine style of Old Spain; the Californians being considered the best bull-fighters in the Mexican dominions.

After a considerable sojourn at Monterey, spent in these very edifying, but not very profitable amusements, the leader of this vagabond party set out with his comrades, on his return journey. Instead of retracing their steps through the mountains, they passed round their southern extremity, and, crossing a range of low hills, found themselves in the sandy plains south of Ogden's River; in traversing which, they again suffered, grievously, for want of water.

In the course of their journey, they encountered a party of Mexicans in pursuit of a gang of natives, who had been stealing horses. The savages of this part of California are represented as extremely poor, and armed

only with stone-pointed arrows; it being the wise policy of the Spaniards not to furnish them with fire-arms. As they find it difficult, with their blunt shafts, to kill the wild game of the mountains, they occasionally supply themselves with food, by entrapping the Spanish horses. Driving them stealthily into fastnesses and ravines, they slaughter them without difficulty, and dry their flesh for provisions. Some they carry off, to trade with distant tribes; and in this way, the Spanish horses pass from hand to hand among the Indians, until they even find their way across the Rocky Mountains.

The Mexicans are continually on the alert, to intercept these marauders; but the Indians are apt to outwit them, and force them to make long and wild expeditions in pursuit of their stolen horses.

Two of the Mexican party just mentioned joined the band of trappers, and proved themselves worthy companions. In the course of their journey through the country frequented by the poor Root Diggers, there seems to have been an emulation between them, which could inflict the greatest outrages upon the natives. The trappers still considered them in the light of dangerous foes; and the Mexicans, very probably, charged them with the sin of horse-stealing; we have no other mode of accounting for the infamous barbarities of which, according to their own story, they were guilty; hunting the poor Indians like wild beasts, and killing them without mercy. The Mexicans excelled at this savage sport;

chasing their unfortunate victims at full speed; noosing them round the neck with their lassos, and then dragging them to death!

Such are the scanty details of this most disgraceful expedition; at least, such are all that Captain Bonneville had the patience to collect; for he was so deeply grieved by the failure of his plans, and so indignant at the atrocities related to him, that he turned, with disgust and horror, from the narrators. Had he exerted a little of the Lynch law of the wilderness, and hanged those dexterous horsemen in their own lassos, it would but have been a well-merited and salutary act of retributive justice. The failure of this expedition was a blow to his pride, and a still greater blow to his purse. The Great Salt Lake still remained unexplored; at the same time, the means which had been furnished so liberally to fit out this favorite expedition, had all been squandered at Monterey; and the peltries, also, which had been collected on the way. He would have but scanty returns, therefore, to make this year, to his associates in the United States; and there was great danger of their becoming disheartened, and abandoning the enterprise.

CHAPTER XL.

TRAVELLERS' TALES.—INDIAN LURKERS.—PROGNOSTICS OF BUCKEYE.—SIGNS AND PORTENTS.—THE MEDICINE WOLF.—AN ALARM.—AN AMBUSH.—THE CAPTURED PROVANT.—TRIUMPH OF BUCKEYE.—ARRIVAL OF SUPPLIES.—GRAND CAROUSE.—ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE YEAR.—MR. WYETH AND HIS NEW-LEVIED BAND.

THE horror and indignation felt by Captain Bonneville at the excesses of the Californian adventurers, were not participated by his men; on the contrary, the events of that expedition were favorite themes in the camp. The heroes of Monterey bore the palm in all the gossipings among the hunters. Their glowing descriptions of Spanish bear-baits and bull-fights especially, were listened to with intense delight; and had another expedition to California been proposed, the difficulty would have been, to restrain a general eagerness to volunteer.

The Captain had not been long at the rendezvous when he perceived, by various signs, that Indians were lurking in the neighborhood. It was evident that the Blackfoot band, which he had seen when on his march, had dogged his party, and were intent on mischief. He endeavored to keep his camp on the alert; but it is as difficult to

maintain discipline among trappers at a rendezvous, as among sailors when in port.

Buckeye, the Delaware Indian, was scandalized at this heedlessness of the hunters when an enemy was at hand, and was continually preaching up caution. He was a little prone to play the prophet, and to deal in signs and portents, which occasionally excited the merriment of his white comrades. He was a great dreamer, and believed in charms and talismans, or medicines, and could foretell the approach of strangers by the howling or barking of the small prairie wolf. This animal, being driven by the larger wolves from the carcasses left on the hunting grounds by the hunters, follows the trail of the fresh meat carried to the camp. Here the smell of the roast and broiled, mingling with every breeze, keeps them hovering about the neighborhood, scenting every blast, turning up their noses like hungry hounds, and testifying their pinching hunger by long whining howls, and impatient barkings. These are interpreted by the superstitious Indians into warnings that strangers are at hand; and one accidental coincidence, like the chance fulfillment of an almanac prediction, is sufficient to cover a thousand failures. This little, whining, feast-smelling animal is, therefore, called among Indians the "medicine wolf;" and such was one of Buckeye's infallible oracles.

One morning early, the soothsaying Delaware appeared with a gloomy countenance. His mind was full of dismal presentiments, whether from mysterious dreams, or

the intimations of the medicine wolf, does not appear. "Danger," he said, "was lurking in their path, and there would be some fighting before sunset." He was bantered for his prophecy, which was attributed to his having supped too heartily, and been visited by bad dreams. In the course of the morning, a party of hunters set out in pursuit of buffalo, taking with them a mule, to bring home the meat they should procure. They had been some few hours absent, when they came clattering at full speed into camp, giving the war-cry of Blackfeet! Blackfeet! Every one seized his weapon, and ran to learn the cause of the alarm. It appeared that the hunters, as they were returning leisurely, leading their mule, well laden with prime pieces of buffalo meat, passed close by a small stream overhung with trees, about two miles from the camp. Suddenly, a party of Blackfeet, who lay in ambush among the thickets, sprang up with a fearful yell, and discharged a volley at the hunters. The latter immediately threw themselves flat on their horses, put them to their speed, and never paused to look behind until they found themselves in camp. Fortunately, they had escaped without a wound: but the mule, with all the "provant," had fallen into the hands of the enemy. This was a loss, as well as an insult, not to be borne. Every man sprang to horse, and with rifle in hand, galloped off to punish the Blackfeet, and rescue the buffalo beef. They came too late; the marauders were off, and all that they found of their mule were the dents of his hoofs, as he

had been conveyed off at a round trot, bearing his savory cargo to the hills, to furnish the scampering savages with a banquet of roast meat at the expense of the white men.

The party returned to camp, balked of their revenge, but still more grievously balked of their supper. Buckeye, the Delaware, sat smoking by his fire, perfectly composed. As the hunters related the particulars of the attack, he listened in silence, with unruffled countenance, then pointing to the west, "The sun has not yet set," said he, "Buckeye did not dream like a fool!"

All present now recollected the prediction of the Indian at daybreak, and were struck with what appeared to be its fulfillment. They called to mind, also, a long catalogue of foregone presentiments and predictions made at various times by the Delaware, and, in their superstitious credulity, began to consider him a veritable seer; without thinking how natural it was to predict danger, and how likely to have the prediction verified in the present instance, when various signs gave evidence of a lurking foe.

The various bands of Captain Bonneville's company had now been assembled for some time at the rendezvous; they had had their fill of feasting, and frolicking, and all the species of wild and often uncouth merry-making, which invariably takes place on these occasions. Their horses, as well as themselves, had recovered from past famine and fatigue, and were again fit for active

service; and an impatience began to manifest itself among the men once more to take the field, and set off on some wandering expedition.

At this juncture Mr. Cerré arrived at the rendezvous at the head of a supply party, bringing goods and equipments from the States. This active leader, it will be recollected, had embarked the year previously in skin-boats on the Bighorn, freighted with the year's collection of peltries. He had met with misfortunes in the course of his voyage: one of his frail barks being upset, and part of the furs lost or damaged.

The arrival of the supplies gave the regular finish to the annual revel. A grand outbreak of wild debauch ensued among the mountaineers; drinking, dancing, swaggering, gambling, quarrelling, and fighting. Alcohol, which, from its portable qualities, containing the greatest quantity of fiery spirit in the smallest compass, is the only liquor carried across the mountains, is the inflammatory beverage at these carousals, and is dealt out to the trappers at four dollars a pint. When inflamed by this fiery beverage, they cut all kinds of mad pranks and gambols, and sometimes burn all their clothes in their drunken bravadoes. A camp, recovering from one of these riotous revels, presents a serio-comic spectacle; black eyes, broken heads, lacklustre visages. Many of the trappers have squandered in one drunken frolic the hard-earned wages of a year; some have run in debt, and must toil on to pay for past pleasure. All are

sated with this deep draught of pleasure, and eager to commence another trapping campaign; for hardship and hard work, spiced with the stimulants of wild adventure, and topped off with an annual frantic carousal, is the lot of the restless trapper.

The captain now made his arrangements for the current year. Cerré and Walker, with a number of men who had been to California, were to proceed to St. Louis with the packages of furs collected during the past year. Another party, headed by a leader named Montero, was to proceed to the Crow country, trap upon its various streams, and among the Black Hills, and thence to proceed to the Arkansas, where he was to go into winter quarters.

The captain marked out for himself a widely different course. He intended to make another expedition, with twenty-three men, to the lower part of the Columbia River, and to proceed to the valley of the Multnomah; after wintering in those parts, and establishing a trade with those tribes, among whom he had sojourned on his first visit, he would return in the spring, cross the Rocky Mountains, and join Montero and his party in the month of July, at the rendezvous of the Arkansas; where he expected to receive his annual supplies from the States.

If the reader will cast his eye upon a map, he may form an idea of the contempt for distance which a man acquires in this vast wilderness, by noticing the extent

of country comprised in these projected wanderings. Just as the different parties were about to set out on the 3d of July, on their opposite routes, Captain Bonneville received intelligence that Wyeth, the indefatigable leader of the salmon-fishing enterprise, who had parted with him about a year previously on the banks of the Bighorn, to descend that wild river in a bull boat, was near at hand, with a new levied band of hunters and trappers, and was on his way once more to the banks of the Columbia.

As we take much interest in the novel enterprise of this "Eastern man," and are pleased with his pushing and persevering spirit; and as his movements are characteristic of life in the wilderness, we will, with the reader's permission, while Captain Bonneville is breaking up his camp and saddling his horses, step back a year in time, and a few hundred miles in distance, to the bank of the Bighorn, and launch ourselves with Wyeth in his bull boat; and though his adventurous voyage will take us many hundreds of miles further down wild and wandering rivers; yet such is the magic power of the pen, that we promise to bring the reader safe back to Bear River Valley, by the time the last horse is saddled.

CHAPTER XLI.

A VOYAGE IN A BULL BOAT.

IT was about the middle of August (1833) that Mr. Nathaniel J. Wyeth, as the reader may recollect, launched his bull boat at the foot of the rapids of the Bighorn, and departed in advance of the parties of Campbell and Captain Bonneville. His boat was made of three buffalo skins, stretched on a light frame, stitched together, and the seams payed with elk tallow and ashes. It was eighteen feet long, and about five feet six inches wide, sharp at each end, with a round bottom, and drew about a foot and a half of water; a depth too great for these upper rivers, which abound with shallows and sand-bars. The crew consisted of two half-breeds, who claimed to be white men, though a mixture of the French creole and the Shawnee and Potawattomie. They claimed, moreover, to be thorough mountaineers, and first-rate hunters—the common boast of these vagabonds of the wilderness. Besides these, there was a Nez Percé lad of eighteen years of age, a kind of servant of all work, whose great aim, like all Indian servants, was to do as little work as possible; there was,

moreover, a half-breed boy, of thirteen, named Baptiste, son of a Hudson's Bay trader by a Flathead beauty; who was travelling with Wyeth to see the world and complete his education. Add to these Mr. Milton Sublette, who went as passenger, and we have the crew of the little bull boat complete.

It certainly was a slight armament with which to run the gauntlet through countries swarming with hostile hordes, and a slight bark to navigate these endless rivers, tossing and pitching down rapids, running on snags and bumping on sand-bars; such, however, are the cockle-shells with which these hardy rovers of the wilderness will attempt the wildest streams; and it is surprising what rough shocks and thumps these boats will endure, and what vicissitudes they will live through. Their duration, however, is but limited; they require frequently to be hauled out of the water and dried, to prevent the hides from becoming water-soaked; and they eventually rot and go to pieces.

The course of the river was a little to the north of east; it ran about five miles an hour, over a gravelly bottom. The banks were generally alluvial, and thickly grown with cotton-wood trees, intermingled occasionally with ash and plum trees. Now and then limestone cliffs and promontories advanced upon the river, making picturesque headlands. Beyond the woody borders rose ranges of naked hills.

Milton Sublette was the Pelorus of this adventurous

bark; being somewhat experienced in this wild kind of navigation. It required all his attention and skill, however, to pilot her clear of sand-bars and snags, or sunken trees. There was often, too, a perplexity of choice, where the river branched into various channels, among clusters of islands; and occasionally the voyagers found themselves aground and had to turn back.

It was necessary, also, to keep a wary eye upon the land, for they were passing through the heart of the Crow country, and were continually in reach of any ambush that might be lurking on shore. The most formidable foes that they saw, however, were three grizzly bears, quietly promenading along the bank, who seemed to gaze at them with surprise as they glided by. Herds of buffalo, also, were moving about, or lying on the ground, like cattle in a pasture; excepting such inhabitants as these, a perfect solitude reigned over the land. There was no sign of human habitation; for the Crows, as we have already shown, are a wandering people, a race of hunters and warriors, who live in tents and on horseback, and are continually on the move.

At night they landed, hauled up their boat to dry, pitched their tent, and made a rousing fire. Then, as it was the first evening of their voyage, they indulged in a regale, relishing their buffalo beef with inspiring alcohol; after which they slept soundly, without dreaming of Crows or Blackfeet. Early in the morning, they again launched their boat and committed themselves to the stream.

In this way, they voyaged for two days without any material occurrence, excepting a severe thunder-storm, which compelled them to put to shore, and wait until it was past. On the third morning, they descried some persons at a distance on the river bank. As they were now, by calculation, at no great distance from Fort Cass, a trading post of the American Fur Company, they supposed these might be some of its people. A nearer approach showed them to be Indians. Descrying a woman apart from the rest, they landed and accosted her. She informed them that the main force of the Crow nation, consisting of five bands, under their several chiefs, were but about two or three miles below, on their way up along the river. This was unpleasant tidings, but to retreat was impossible, and the river afforded no hiding-place. They continued forward, therefore, trusting that, as Fort Cass was so near at hand, the Crows might refrain from any depredations.

Floating down about two miles further, they came in sight of the first band, scattered along the river bank, all well mounted; some armed with guns, others with bows and arrows, and a few with lances. They made a wildly picturesque appearance, managing their horses with accustomed dexterity and grace. Nothing can be more spirited than a band of Crow cavaliers. They are a fine race of men, averaging six feet in height, lithe and active, with hawk's eyes and Roman noses. The latter feature is common to the Indians on the east side of the Rocky

Mountains; those on the western side have generally straight or flat noses.

Wyeth would fain have slipped by this cavalcade unnoticed; but the river, at this place, was not more than ninety yards across; he was perceived, therefore, and hailed by the vagabond warriors, and, we presume, in no very choice language; for, among their other accomplishments, the Crows are famed for possessing a Billingsgate vocabulary of unrivalled opulence, and for being by no means sparing of it whenever an occasion offers. Indeed, though Indians are generally very lofty, rhetorical, and figurative in their language at all great talks, and high ceremonials, yet, if trappers and traders may be believed, they are the most unsavory vagabonds in their ordinary colloquies; they make no hesitation to call a spade a spade; and when they once undertake to call hard names, the famous pot and kettle, of vituperating memory, are not to be compared with them for scurrility of epithet.

To escape the infliction of any compliments of the kind, or the launching, peradventure, of more dangerous missiles, Wyeth landed with the best grace in his power, and approached the chief of the band. It was Arapooish, the quondam friend of Rose the outlaw, and one whom we have already mentioned as being anxious to promote a friendly intercourse between his tribe and the white men. He was a tall, stout man, of good presence, and received the voyagers very graciously. His people,

too, thronged around them, and were officiously attentive after the Crow fashion. One took a great fancy to Baptiste, the Flathead boy, and a still greater fancy to a ring on his finger, which he transposed to his own with surprising dexterity, and then disappeared with a quick step among the crowd.

Another was no less pleased with the Nez Percé lad, and nothing would do but he must exchange knives with him; drawing a new knife out of the Nez Percé's scabbard, and putting an old one in its place. Another stepped up and replaced this old knife with one still older, and a third helped himself to knife, scabbard, and all. It was with much difficulty that Wyeth and his companions extricated themselves from the clutches of these officious Crows, before they were entirely plucked.

Falling down the river a little further, they came in sight of the second band, and sheered to the opposite side, with the intention of passing them. The Crows were not to be evaded. Some pointed their guns at the boat, and threatened to fire; others stripped, plunged into the stream, and came swimming across. Making a virtue of necessity, Wyeth threw a cord to the first that came within reach, as if he wished to be drawn to the shore.

In this way he was overhauled by every band, and by the time he and his people came out of the busy hands of the last, they were eased of most of their superfluities. Nothing, in all probability, but the proximity of the

American trading post, kept these land pirates from making a good prize of the bull boat and all its contents.

These bands were in full march, equipped for war, and evidently full of mischief. They were, in fact, the very bands that overrun the land in the autumn of 1833; partly robbed Fitzpatrick of his horses and effects; hunted and harassed Captain Bonneville and his people; broke up their trapping campaigns, and, in a word, drove them all out of the Crow country. It has been suspected that they were set on to these pranks by some of the American Fur Company, anxious to defeat the plans of their rivals of the Rocky Mountain Company: for at this time their competition was at its height, and the trade of the Crow country was a great object of rivalry. What makes this the more probable is, that the Crows in their depredations seemed by no means blood-thirsty, but intent chiefly on robbing the parties of their traps and horses, thereby disabling them from prosecuting their hunting.

We should observe that this year the Rocky Mountain Company were pushing their way up the rivers, and establishing rival posts near those of the American Company; and that, at the very time of which we are speaking, Captain Sublette was ascending the Yellowstone with a keel boat, laden with supplies; so that there was every prospect of this eager rivalship being carried to extremities.

The last band of Crow warriors had scarce disappeared

in the cloud of dust they had raised, when our voyagers arrived at the mouth of the river, and glided into the current of the Yellowstone. Turning down this stream, they made for Fort Cass, which is situated on the right bank, about three miles below the Bighorn. On the opposite side, they beheld a party of thirty-one savages, which they soon ascertained to be Blackfeet. The width of the river enabled them to keep at a sufficient distance, and they soon landed at Fort Cass. This was a mere fortification against Indians—being a stockade of about one hundred and thirty feet square, with two bastions at the extreme corners. M'Tulloch, an agent of the American Company, was stationed there with twenty men; two boats of fifteen tons burden were lying here; but at certain seasons of the year a steamboat can come up to the fort.

They had scarcely arrived, when the Blackfeet warriors made their appearance on the opposite bank, displaying two American flags in token of amity. They plunged into the river, swam across, and were kindly received at the fort. They were some of the very men who had been engaged the year previously in the battle at Pierre's Hole, and a fierce-looking set of fellows they were; tall and hawk-nosed, and very much resembling the Crows. They professed to be on an amicable errand, to make peace with the Crows, and set off in all haste, before night, to overtake them. Wyeth predicted that they would lose their scalps, for he had heard the Crows

denounce vengeance on them, for having murdered two of their warriors who had ventured among them on the faith of a treaty of peace. . It is probable, however, that this pacific errand was all a pretence, and that the real object of the Blackfeet braves was to hang about the skirts of the Crow bands, steal their horses, and take the scalps of stragglers.

At Fort Cass, Mr. Wyeth disposed of some packages of beaver, and a quantity of buffalo robes. On the following morning (August 18th), he once more launched his bull boat, and proceeded down the Yellowstone, which inclined in an east-northeast direction. The river had alluvial bottoms, fringed with great quantities of the sweet cotton-wood, and interrupted occasionally by "bluffs" of sandstone. The current occasionally brings down fragments of granite and porphyry.

In the course of the day, they saw something moving on the bank among the trees, which they mistook for game of some kind; and, being in want of provisions, pulled towards shore. They discovered, just in time, a party of Blackfeet, lurking in the thickets, and sheered, with all speed, to the opposite side of the river.

After a time they came in sight of a gang of elk. Wyeth was immediately for pursuing them, rifle in hand, but saw evident signs of dissatisfaction in his half-breed hunters; who considered him as trenching upon their province, and meddling with things quite above his capacity; for these veterans of the wilderness are exceedingly

pragmatical on points of venery and woodcraft, and tenacious of their superiority; looking down with infinite contempt upon all raw beginners. The two worthies, therefore, sallied forth themselves, but after a time, returned empty-handed. They laid the blame, however, entirely on their guns; two miserable old pieces with flint locks, which with all their picking and hammering, were continually apt to miss fire. These great boasters of the wilderness, however, are very often exceeding bad shots, and fortunate it is for them when they have old flint guns to bear the blame.

The next day they passed where a great herd of buffalo were bellowing on a prairie. Again the Castor and Pollux of the wilderness sallied, and again their flint guns were at fault, and missed fire, and nothing went off but the buffalo.

Wyeth now found there was danger of losing his dinner if he depended upon his hunters; he took rifle in hand, therefore, and went forth himself. In the course of an hour, he returned laden with buffalo meat, to the great mortification of the two regular hunters, who were annoyed at being eclipsed by a greenhorn.

All hands now set to work to prepare the mid-day repast. A fire was made under an immense cotton-wood tree, that overshadowed a beautiful piece of meadow land; rich morsels of buffalo hump were soon roasting before it; in a hearty and prolonged repast, the two unsuccessful hunters gradually recovered from their

mortification; threatened to discard their old flint guns as soon as they should reach the settlements, and boasted more than ever of the wonderful shots they had made, when they had guns that never missed fire.

Having hauled up their boat to dry in the sun, previous to making their repast, the voyagers now set it once more afloat, and proceeded on their way. They had constructed a sail out of their old tent, which they hoisted whenever the wind was favorable, and thus skimmed along down the stream. Their voyage was pleasant notwithstanding the perils by sea and land, with which they were environed. Whenever they could, they encamped on islands, for the greater security. If on the mainland, and in a dangerous neighborhood, they would shift their camp after dark, leaving their fire burning, dropping down the river some distance, and making no fire at their second encampment. Sometimes they would float all night with the current, one keeping watch and steering while the rest slept: in such case, they would haul their boat on shore at noon of the following day to dry; for notwithstanding every precaution, she was gradually getting water-soaked and rotten.

There was something pleasingly solemn and mysterious in thus floating down these wild rivers at night. The purity of the atmosphere in these elevated regions gave additional splendor to the stars, and heightened the magnificence of the firmament. The occasional rush and laving of the waters; the vague sounds from the sur-

rounding wilderness; the dreary howl, or rather whine of wolves from the plains; the low grunting and bellowing of the buffalo, and the shrill neighing of the elk, struck the ear with an effect unknown in the daytime.

The two knowing hunters had scarcely recovered from one mortification, when they were fated to experience another. As the boat was gliding swiftly round a low promontory, thinly covered with trees, one of them gave the alarm of Indians. The boat was instantly shoved from shore, and every one caught up his rifle. "Where are they?" cried Wyeth.

"There—there! riding on horseback!" cried one of the hunters.

"Yes; with white scarfs on!" cried the other.

Wyeth looked in the direction they pointed, but descried nothing but two bald eagles, perched on a low dry branch, beyond the thickets, and seeming, from the rapid motion of the boat, to be moving swiftly in an opposite direction. The detection of this blunder in the two veterans, who prided themselves on the sureness and quickness of their sight, produced a hearty laugh at their expense, and put an end to their vauntings.

The Yellowstone, above the confluence of the Bighorn, is a clear stream; its waters were now gradually growing turbid, and assuming the yellow clay color of the Missouri. The current was about four miles an hour, with occasional rapids, some of them dangerous; but the voyagers passed them all without accident. The banks of

the river were in many places precipitous, with strata of bituminous coal.

They now entered a region abounding with buffalo—that ever-journeying animal, which moves in countless droves from point to point of the vast wilderness; traversing plains, pouring through the intricate defiles of mountains, swimming rivers, ever on the move; guided on its boundless migrations by some traditionary knowledge, like the finny tribes of the ocean, which, at certain seasons, find their mysterious paths across the deep, and revisit the remotest shores.

These great migratory herds of buffalo have their hereditary paths and highways, worn deep through the country, and making for the surest passes of the mountains, and the most practicable fords of the rivers. When once a great column is in full career, it goes straight forward, regardless of all obstacles; those in front being impelled by the moving mass behind. At such times they will break through a camp, trampling down every thing in their course.

It was the lot of the voyagers, one night, to encamp at one of these buffalo landing-places, and exactly on the trail. They had not been long asleep, when they were awakened by a great bellowing and tramping, and the rush, and splash, and snorting of animals in the river. They had just time to ascertain that a buffalo army was entering the river on the opposite side, and making towards the landing-place. With all haste they moved

their boat and shifted their camp, by which time the head of the column had reached the shore, and came pressing up the bank.

It was a singular spectacle, by the uncertain moonlight, to behold this countless throng making their way across the river, blowing, and bellowing, and splashing. Sometimes they pass in such dense and continuous column as to form a temporary dam across the river; the waters of which rise and rush over their backs, or between their squadrons. The roaring and rushing sound of one of these vast herds crossing a river, may sometimes in a still night be heard for miles.

The voyagers now had game in profusion. They could kill as many buffalo as they pleased, and, occasionally, were wanton in their havoc, especially among scattered herds, that came swimming near the boat. On one occasion, an old buffalo bull approached so near that the half-breeds must fain try to noose him, as they would a wild horse. The noose was successfully thrown around his head, and secured him by the horns, and they now promised themselves ample sport. The buffalo made a prodigious turmoil in the water, bellowing, and blowing, and floundering; and they all floated down the stream together. At length he found a foothold on a sand-bar, and taking to his heels, whirled the boat after him, like a whale when harpooned; so that the hunters were obliged to cast off their rope, with which strange head-gear the venerable bull made off to the prairies.

On the 24th of August, the bull boat emerged, with its adventurous crew, into the broad bosom of the mighty Missouri. Here, about six miles above the mouth of the Yellowstone, the voyagers landed at Fort Union, the distributing post of the American Fur Company in the western country. It was a stockaded fortress, about two hundred and twenty feet square, pleasantly situated on a high bank. Here they were hospitably entertained by Mr. M'Kenzie, the superintendent, and remained with him three days, enjoying the unusual luxuries of bread, butter, milk, and cheese, for the fort was well supplied with domestic cattle, though it had no garden. The atmosphere of these elevated regions is said to be too dry for the culture of vegetables; yet the voyagers, in coming down the Yellowstone, had met with plums, grapes, cherries, and currants, and had observed ash and elm trees. Where these grow, the climate cannot be incompatible with gardening.

At Fort Union Wyeth met with a melancholy memento of one of his men. This was a powder-flask, which a clerk had purchased from a Blackfoot warrior. It bore the initials of poor More, the unfortunate youth murdered the year previously, at Jackson's Hole, by the Blackfeet, and whose bones had been subsequently found by Captain Bonneville. This flask had either been passed from hand to hand of the tribe, or, perhaps, had been brought to the fort by the very savage who slew him.

As the bull boat was now nearly worn out, and altogether unfit for the broader and more turbulent stream of the Missouri, it was given up, and a canoe of cottonwood, about twenty feet long, fabricated by the Blackfeet, was purchased to supply its place. In this Wyeth hoisted his sail, and bidding adieu to the hospitable superintendent of Fort Union, turned his prow to the east, and set off down the Missouri.

He had not proceeded many hours, before, in the evening, he came to a large keel boat, at anchor. It proved to be the boat of Captain William Sublette, freighted with munitions for carrying on a powerful opposition to the American Fur Company. The voyagers went on board, where they were treated with the hearty hospitality of the wilderness, and passed a social evening, talking over past scenes and adventures, and especially the memorable fight at Pierre's Hole.

Here Milton Sublette determined to give up further voyaging in the canoe, and remain with his brother; accordingly, in the morning, the fellow-voyagers took kind leave of each other, and Wyeth continued on his course. There was now no one on board of his boat that had ever voyaged on the Missouri; it was, however, all plain sailing down the stream, without any chance of missing the way.

All day the voyagers pulled gently along, and landed in the evening and supped; then reëmbarking, they suffered the canoe to float down with the current, taking

turns to watch and sleep. The night was calm and serene; the elk kept up a continual whinnying or squealing, being the commencement of the season when they are in heat. In the midst of the night, the canoe struck on a sand-bar, and all hands were aroused by the rush and roar of the wild waters, which broke around her. They were all obliged to jump overboard, and work hard to get her off, which was accomplished with much difficulty.

In the course of the following day they saw three grizzly bears at different times along the bank. The last one was on a point of land, and was evidently making for the river, to swim across. The two half-breed hunters were now eager to repeat the maneuver of the noose; promising to entrap Bruin, and have rare sport in strangling and drowning him. Their only fear was, that he might take fright and return to land before they could get between him and the shore. Holding back, therefore, until he was fairly committed in the centre of the stream, they then pulled forward with might and main, so as to cut off his retreat, and take him in the rear. One of the worthies stationed himself in the bow, with the cord and slip-noose, the other, with the Nez Percé, managed the paddles. There was nothing further from the thoughts of honest Bruin, however, than to beat a retreat. Just as the canoe was drawing near, he turned suddenly round and made for it, with a horrible snarl, and a tremendous show of teeth. The affrighted

hunter called to his comrades to paddle off. Scarce had they turned the boat, when the bear laid his enormous claws on the gunwale, and attempted to get on board. The canoe was nearly overturned, and a deluge of water came pouring over the gunwale. All was clamor, terror, and confusion. Every one bawled out—the bear roared and snarled—one caught up a gun; but water had rendered it useless. Others handled their paddles more effectually, and beating old Bruin about the head and claws, obliged him to relinquish his hold. They now plied their paddles with might and main, the bear made the best of his way to shore, and so ended the second exploit of the noose—the hunters determining to have no more naval contests with grizzly bears.

The voyagers were now out of the range of Crows and Blackfeet; but they were approaching the country of the Rees, or Arickaras; a tribe no less dangerous, and who were, generally, hostile to small parties.

In passing through their country, Wyeth laid by all day, and drifted quietly down the river at night. In this way he passed on, until he supposed himself safely through the region of danger, when he resumed his voyaging in the open day. On the 3d of September he had landed, at mid-day, to dine; and while some were making a fire, one of the hunters mounted a high bank to look out for game. He had scarce glanced his eye round, when he perceived horses grazing on the opposite side of the river. Crouching down, he slunk back to the camp,

and reported what he had seen. On further reconnoitring, the voyagers counted twenty-one lodges; and, from the number of horses, computed that there must be nearly a hundred Indians encamped there. They now drew their boat, with all speed and caution, into a thicket of water willows, and remained closely concealed all day. As soon as the night closed in they reëmbarked. The moon would rise early; so that they had but about two hours of darkness to get past the camp. The night, however, was cloudy, with a blustering wind. Silently, and with muffled oars, they glided down the river, keeping close under the shore opposite to the camp, watching its various lodges and fires, and the dark forms passing to and fro between them. Suddenly, on turning a point of land, they found themselves close upon a camp on their own side of the river. It appeared that not more than one half of the band had crossed. They were within a few yards of the shore; they saw distinctly the savages — some standing, some lying round the fire. Horses were grazing around. Some lodges were set up; others had been sent across the river. The red glare of the fires upon these wild groups and harsh faces, contrasted with the surrounding darkness, had a startling effect, as the voyagers suddenly came upon the scene. The dogs of the camp perceived them, and barked; but the Indians, fortunately, took no heed of their clamor. Wyeth instantly sheered his boat out into the stream: when, unluckily, it struck upon a sand-bar, and stuck fast.

It was a perilous and trying situation; for he was fixed between the two camps, and within rifle range of both. All hands jumped out into the water, and tried to get the boat off; but as no one dared to give the word, they could not pull together, and their labor was in vain. In this way they labored for a long time; until Wyeth thought of giving a signal for a general heave by lifting his hat. The expedient succeeded. They launched their canoe again into deep water, and getting in, had the delight of seeing the camp fires of the savages soon fading in the distance.

They continued under way the greater part of the night, until far beyond all danger from this band, when they pulled to shore and encamped.

The following day was windy, and they came near upsetting their boat in carrying sail. Towards evening, the wind subsided and a beautiful calm night succeeded. They floated along with the current throughout the night, taking turns to watch and steer. The deep stillness of the night was occasionally interrupted by the neighing of the elk, the hoarse lowing of the buffalo, the hooting of large owls, and the screeching of the small ones, now and then the splash of a beaver, or the gong-like sound of the swan.

Part of their voyage was extremely tempestuous, with high winds, tremendous thunder, and soaking rain; and they were repeatedly in extreme danger from drift-wood and sunken trees. On one occasion, having continued to

float at night, after the moon was down, they ran under a great snag, or sunken tree, with dry branches above the water. These caught the mast, while the boat swung round, broadside to the stream, and began to fill with water. Nothing saved her from total wreck but cutting away the mast. She then drove down the stream, but left one of the unlucky half-breeds clinging to the snag, like a monkey to a pole. It was necessary to run inshore, toil up laboriously along the eddies, and to attain some distance above the snag, when they launched forth again into the stream, and floated down with it to his rescue.

We forbear to detail all the circumstances and adventures of upwards of a month's voyage, down the windings and doublings of this vast river; in the course of which they stopped occasionally at a post of one of the rival fur companies, or at a government agency for an Indian tribe. Neither shall we dwell upon the changes of climate and productions, as the voyagers swept down from north to south, across several degrees of latitude, arriving at the regions of oaks and sycamores; of mulberry and basswood trees; of paroquets and wild turkeys. This is one of the characteristics of the middle and lower part of the Missouri; but still more so of the Mississippi, whose rapid current traverses a succession of latitudes, so as in a few days to float the voyager almost from the frozen regions to the tropics.

The voyage of Wyeth shows the regular unobstructed flow of the rivers on the east side of the Rocky Moun-

tains, in contrast to those of the western side where rocks and rapids continually menace and obstruct the voyager. We find him in a frail bark of skins, launching himself in a stream at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and floating down from river to river, as they empty themselves into each other; and so he might have kept on upwards of two thousand miles, until his little bark should drift into the ocean. At present, we shall stop with him at Cantonment Leavenworth, the frontier post of the United States, where he arrived on the 27th of September.

Here, his first care was to have his Nez Percé Indian, and his half-breed boy, Baptiste, vaccinated. As they approached the fort, they were hailed by the sentinel. The sight of a soldier in full array, with what appeared to be a long knife glittering on the end of his musket, struck Baptiste with such affright, that he took to his heels, bawling for mercy at the top of his voice. The Nez Percé would have followed him, had not Wyeth assured him of his safety. When they underwent the operation of the lancet, the doctor's wife and another lady were present—both beautiful women. They were the first white women that they had seen, and they could not keep their eyes off of them. On returning to the boat, they recounted to their companions all that they had observed at the fort; but were especially eloquent about the white squaws, who, they said, were white as snow, and more beautiful than any human being they had ever beheld.

We shall not accompany the captain any further in his voyage; but will simply state, that he made his way to Boston, where he succeeded in organizing an association under the name of "The Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company," for his original objects of a salmon fishery and a trade in furs. A brig, the May Dacres, had been dispatched for the Columbia with supplies; and he was now on his way to the same point, at the head of sixty men, whom he had enlisted at St. Louis; some of whom were experienced hunters, and all more habituated to the life of the wilderness than his first band of "down-easters."

We will now return to Captain Bonneville and his party, whom we left, making up their packs and saddling their horses, in Bear River Valley.

CHAPTER XLII.

DEPARTURE OF CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE FOR THE COLUMBIA.—ADVANCE OF WYETH.—EFFORTS TO KEEP THE LEAD.—HUDSON'S BAY PARTY.—A JUNKETING.—A DELECTABLE BEVERAGE.—HONEY AND ALCOHOL.—HIGH CAROUSING.—THE CANADIAN BON VIVANT.—A CACHE.—A RAPID MOVE.—WYETH AND HIS PLANS.—HIS TRAVELLING COMPANIONS.—BUFFALO HUNTING.—MORE CONVIVIALITY.—AN INTERRUPTION.

IT was the 3d of July that Captain Bonneville set out on his second visit to the banks of the Columbia, at the head of twenty-three men. He travelled leisurely, to keep his horses fresh, until, on the 10th of July, a scout brought word that Wyeth, with his band, was but fifty miles in the rear, and pushing forward with all speed. This caused some bustle in the camp; for it was important to get first to the buffalo ground to secure provisions for the journey. As the horses were too heavily laden to travel fast, a cache was digged as promptly as possible, to receive all superfluous baggage. Just as it was finished, a spring burst out of the earth at the bottom. Another cache was therefore digged, about two miles further on, when, as they were about to bury the effects, a line of horsemen, with pack-horses, were seen streaking over the plain, and encamped close by.

It proved to be a small band in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, under the command of a veteran Canadian; one of those petty leaders, who, with a small party of men, and a small supply of goods, are employed to follow up a band of Indians from one hunting ground to another, and buy up their peltries.

Having received numerous civilities from the Hudson's Bay Company, the captain sent an invitation to the officers of the party to an evening regale, and set to work to make jovial preparations. As the night air in these elevated regions is apt to be cold, a blazing fire was soon made, that would have done credit to a Christmas dinner instead of a midsummer banquet. The parties met in high good-fellowship. There was abundance of such hunters' fare as the neighborhood furnished; and it was all discussed with mountain appetites. They talked over all the events of their late campaigns; but the Canadian veteran had been unlucky in some of his transactions; and his brow began to grow cloudy. Captain Bonneville remarked his rising spleen, and regretted that he had no juice of the grape to keep it down.

A man's wit, however, is quick and inventive in the wilderness; a thought suggested itself to the captain, how he might brew a delectable beverage. Among his stores was a keg of honey but half exhausted. This he filled up with alcohol, and stirred the fiery and mellifluous ingredients together. The glorious result may readily be imagined; a happy compound, of strength and

sweetness, enough to soothe the most ruffled temper, and unsettle the most solid understanding.

The beverage worked to a charm; the can circulated merrily; the first deep draught washed out every care from the mind of the veteran; the second elevated his spirit to the clouds. He was, in fact, a boon companion, as all veteran Canadian traders are apt to be. He now became glorious; talked over all his exploits, his huntings, his fightings with Indian braves, his loves with Indian beauties; sang snatches of old French ditties and Canadian boat songs; drank deeper and deeper, sang louder and louder, until, having reached a climax of drunken gayety, he gradually declined, and at length fell fast asleep upon the ground. After a long nap, he again raised his head, imbibed another potation of the "sweet and strong," flashed up with another slight blaze of French gayety, and again fell asleep.

The morning found him still upon the field of action, but in sad and sorrowful condition; suffering the penalties of past pleasures, and calling to mind the captain's dulcet compound, with many a retch and spasm. It seemed as if the honey and alcohol, which had passed so glibly and smoothly over his tongue, were at war within his stomach; and that he had a swarm of bees within his head. In short, so helpless and woebegone was his plight, that his party proceeded on their march without him—the captain promising to bring him on in safety, in the after part of the day.

As soon as this party had moved off, Captain Bonneville's men proceeded to construct and fill their cache; and just as it was completed the party of Wyeth was descried at a distance. In a moment all was activity to take the road. The horses were prepared and mounted; and being lightened of a great part of their burdens, were able to move with celerity. As to the worthy convive of the preceding evening, he was carefully gathered up from the hunter's couch on which he lay, repentant and supine, and, being packed upon one of the horses, was hurried forward with the convoy, groaning and ejaculating at every jolt.

In the course of the day, Wyeth, being lightly mounted, rode ahead of his party, and overtook Captain Bonneville. Their meeting was friendly and courteous; and they discussed, sociably, their respective fortunes since they separated on the banks of the Bighorn. Wyeth announced his intention of establishing a small trading post at the mouth of the Portneuf, and leaving a few men there, with a quantity of goods, to trade with the neighboring Indians. He was compelled, in fact, to this measure, in consequence of the refusal of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company to take a supply of goods, which he had brought out for them according to contract, and which he had no other mode of disposing of. He further informed Captain Bonneville that the competition between the Rocky Mountain and American Fur Companies, which had led to such nefarious stratagems, and deadly

feuds, was at an end; they having divided the country between them; allotting boundaries, within which each was to trade and hunt, so as not to interfere with the other.

In company with Wyeth were travelling two men of science—Mr. Nuttall, the botanist; the same who ascended the Missouri, at the time of the expedition to Astoria; and Mr. Townshend, the ornithologist. From these gentlemen we may look forward to important information concerning these interesting regions. There were three religious missionaries, also, bound to the shores of the Columbia, to spread the light of the Gospel in that fair wilderness.

After riding for some time together, in friendly conversation, Wyeth returned to his party, and Captain Bonneville continued to press forward, and to gain ground. At night, he sent off the sadly sober, and moralizing chief of the Hudson's Bay Company, under a proper escort, to rejoin his people, his route branching off in a different direction. The latter took a cordial leave of his host, hoping, on some future occasion, to repay his hospitality in kind.

In the morning the captain was early on the march, throwing scouts out far ahead, to scour hill and dale, in search of buffalo. He had confidently expected to find game, in abundance, on the head waters of the Portneuf; but on reaching that region, not a track was to be seen.

At length one of the scouts, who had made a wide

sweep away to the head waters of the Blackfoot River, discovered great herds quietly grazing in the adjacent meadows. He set out on his return, to report his discoveries; but night overtaking him, he was kindly and hospitably entertained at the camp of Wyeth. As soon as day dawned, he hastened to his own camp with the welcome intelligence; and about ten o'clock of the same morning, Captain Bonneville's party were in the midst of the game.

The packs were scarcely off the backs of the mules, when the runners, mounted on the fleetest horses, were full tilt after the buffalo. Others of the men were busied erecting scaffolds, and other contrivances, for jerking or drying meat; others were lighting great fires for the same purpose; soon the hunters began to make their appearance, bringing in the choicest morsels of buffalo meat: these were placed upon the scaffolds, and the whole camp presented a scene of singular hurry and activity. At daylight the next morning, the runners again took the field, with similar success; and, after an interval of repose made their third and last chase, about twelve o'clock, for by this time Wyeth's party was in sight. The game being now driven into a valley, at some distance, Wyeth was obliged to fix his camp there; but he came in the evening to pay Captain Bonneville a visit. He was accompanied by Captain Stewart, the amateur traveller, who had not yet sated his appetite for the adventurous life of the wilderness. With him, also, was

a Mr. M'Kay, a half-breed, son of the unfortunate adventurer of the same name, who came out in the first maritime expedition to Astoria, and was blown up in the Tonquin. His son had grown up in the employ of the British fur companies; and was a prime hunter, and a daring partisan. He held, moreover, a farm, in the valley of the Wallamut.

The three visitors, when they reached Captain Bonneville's camp, were surprised to find no one in it but himself and three men; his party being dispersed in all directions, to make the most of their present chance for hunting. They remonstrated with him on the imprudence of remaining with so trifling a guard, in a region so full of danger. Captain Bonneville vindicated the policy of his conduct. He never hesitated to send out all his hunters when any important object was to be attained; and experience had taught him that he was most secure, when his forces were thus distributed over the surrounding country. He then was sure that no enemy could approach from any direction without being discovered by his hunters; who have a quick eye for detecting the slightest signs of the proximity of Indians; and who would instantly convey intelligence to the camp.

The captain now set to work with his men to prepare a suitable entertainment for his guests. It was a time of plenty in the camp; of prime hunters' dainties; of buffalo humps, and buffalo tongues; and roasted ribs, and broiled marrow-bones: all these were cooked in hunters'

style; served up with a profusion known only on a plentiful hunting ground, and discussed with an appetite that would astonish the puny gourmands of the cities. But above all, and to give a bacchanalian grace to this truly masculine repast, the captain produced his mellifluous keg of home-brewed nectar, which had been so potent over the senses of the veteran of Hudson's Bay. Potations, pottle deep, again went round: never did beverage excite greater glee, or meet with more rapturous commendation. The parties were fast advancing to that happy state, which would have insured ample cause for the next day's repentance, and the bees were already beginning to buzz about their ears, when a messenger came spurring to the camp with intelligence that Wyeth's people had got entangled in one of those deep and frightful ravines, piled with immense fragments of volcanic rock, which gash the whole country about the head waters of the Blackfoot River. The revel was instantly at an end; the keg of sweet and potent home-brewed was deserted; and the guests departed with all speed, to aid in extricating their companions from the volcanic ravine.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A RAPID MARCH.—A CLOUD OF DUST.—WILD HORSEMEN.—"HIGH JINKS."—HORSE-RACING AND RIFLE SHOOTING.—THE GAME OF "HAND."—THE FISHING SEASON.—MODE OF FISHING.—TABLE LANDS.—SALMON FISHERS.—THE CAPTAIN'S VISIT TO AN INDIAN LODGE.—THE INDIAN GIRL.—THE POCKET MIRROR.—SUPPER.—TROUBLES OF AN EVIL CONSCIENCE.

"UP and away!" is the first thought at daylight of the Indian trader, when a rival is at hand and distance is to be gained. Early in the morning, Captain Bonneville ordered the half-dried meat to be packed upon the horses, and leaving Wyeth and his party to hunt the scattered buffalo, pushed off rapidly to the east, to regain the plain of the Portneuf. His march was rugged and dangerous; through volcanic hills, broken into cliffs and precipices, and seamed with tremendous chasms, where the rocks rose like walls.

On the second day, however, he encamped once more in the plain, and as it was still early, some of the men strolled out to the neighboring hills. In casting their eyes round the country, they perceived a great cloud of dust rising in the south, and evidently approaching. Hastening back to the camp, they gave the alarm. Preparations were instantly made to receive an enemy; while

some of the men, throwing themselves upon the "running horses" kept for hunting, galloped off to reconnoitre. In a little while they made signals from a distance that all was friendly. By this time, the cloud of dust had swept on as if hurried along by a blast, and a band of wild horsemen came dashing at full leap into the camp, yelling and whooping like so many maniacs. Their dresses, their accoutrements, their mode of riding, and their uncouth clamor, made them seem a party of savages arrayed for war; but they proved to be principally half-breeds, and white men grown savage in the wilderness, who were employed as trappers and hunters in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Here was again "high jinks" in the camp. Captain Bonneville's men hailed these wild scamperers as congenial spirits, or, rather, as the very game birds of their class. They entertained them with the hospitality of mountaineers, feasting them at every fire. At first, there were mutual details of adventures and exploits, and broad joking mingled with peals of laughter. Then came on boasting of the comparative merits of horses and rifles, which soon engrossed every tongue. This naturally led to racing and shooting at a mark; one trial of speed and skill succeeded another, shouts and acclamations rose from the victorious parties, fierce altercations succeeded, and a general mêlée was about to take place, when suddenly the attention of the quarrellers was arrested by a strange kind of Indian chant or chorus,

that seemed to operate upon them as a charm. Their fury was at an end; a tacit reconciliation succeeded, and the ideas of the whole mongrel crowd—whites, half-breeds, and squaws—were turned in a new direction. They all formed into groups, and taking their places at the several fires, prepared for one of the most exciting amusements of the Nez Percés, and the other tribes of the Far West.

The choral chant, in fact, which had thus acted as a charm, was a kind of wild accompaniment to the favorite Indian game of "Hand." This is played by two parties drawn out in opposite platoons before a blazing fire. It is in some respects like the old game of passing the ring or the button, and detecting the hand which holds it. In the present game, the object hidden, or the *cache* as it is called by the trappers, is a small splint of wood, or other diminutive article, that may be concealed in the closed hand. This is passed backwards and forwards among the party "in hand," while the party "out of hand" guess where it is concealed. To heighten the excitement and confuse the guessers, a number of dry poles are laid before each platoon, upon which the members of the party "in hand" beat furiously with short staves, keeping time to the choral chant already mentioned, which waxes fast and furious as the game proceeds. As large bets are staked upon the game, the excitement is prodigious. Each party in turn bursts out in full chorus, beating, and yelling, and working themselves up into

such a heat, that the perspiration rolls down their naked shoulders, even in the cold of a winter night. The bets are doubled and trebled as the game advances, the mental excitement increases almost to madness, and all the worldly effects of the gamblers are often hazarded upon the position of a straw.

These gambling games were kept up throughout the night; every fire glared upon the group that looked like a crew of maniacs at their frantic orgies; and the scene would have been kept up throughout the succeeding day, had not Captain Bonneville interposed his authority, and at the usual hour issued his marching orders.

Proceeding down the course of Snake River, the hunters regularly returned to camp in the evening laden with wild geese, which were yet scarcely able to fly, and were easily caught in great numbers. It was now the season of the annual fish-feast, with which the Indians in these parts celebrate the first appearance of the salmon in this river. These fish are taken in great numbers at the numerous falls of about four feet pitch. The Indians flank the shallow water just below, and spear them as they attempt to pass. In wide parts of the river, also, they place a sort of chevaux-de-frize, or fence, of poles interwoven with withes and forming an angle in the middle of the current, where a small opening is left for the salmon to pass. Around this opening the Indians station themselves on small rafts, and ply their spears with great success.

The table lands so common in this region have a sandy soil, inconsiderable in depth, and covered with sage, or more properly speaking wormwood. Below this is a level stratum of rock, riven occasionally by frightful chasms. The whole plain rises as it approaches the river, and terminates with high and broken cliffs, difficult to pass, and in many places so precipitous that it is impossible, for days together, to get down to the water's edge to give drink to the horses. This obliges the traveller occasionally to abandon the vicinity of the river, and make a wide sweep into the interior.

It was now far in the month of July, and the party suffered extremely from sultry weather and dusty travelling. The flies and gnats, too, were extremely troublesome to the horses; especially when keeping along the edge of the river where it runs between low sand-banks. Whenever the travellers encamped in the afternoon, the horses retired to the gravelly shores and remained there, without attempting to feed, until the cool of the evening. As to the travellers, they plunged into the clear and cool current, to wash away the dust of the road, and refresh themselves after the heat of the day. The nights were always cool and pleasant.

At one place where they encamped for some time, the river was nearly five hundred yards wide, and studded with grassy islands, adorned with groves of willow and cotton-wood. Here the Indians were assembled in great numbers, and had barricaded the channels between the

islands, to enable them to spear the salmon with greater facility. They were a timid race, and seemed unaccustomed to the sight of white men. Entering one of the huts, Captain Bonneville found the inhabitants just proceeding to cook a fine salmon. It is put into a pot filled with cold water, and hung over the fire. The moment the water begins to boil, the fish is considered cooked.

Taking his seat unceremoniously, and lighting his pipe, the captain awaited the cooking of the fish, intending to invite himself to the repast. The owner of the hut seemed to take his intrusion in good part. While conversing with him, the captain felt something move behind him, and turning round and removing a few skins and old buffalo robes, discovered a young girl, about fourteen years of age, crouched beneath, who directed her large black eyes full in his face, and continued to gaze in mute surprise and terror. The captain endeavored to dispel her fears, and drawing a bright ribbon from his pocket, attempted repeatedly to tie it round her neck. She jerked back at each attempt, uttering a sound very much like a snarl; nor could all the blandishments of the captain, albeit a pleasant, good-looking, and somewhat gallant man, succeed in conquering the shyness of the savage little beauty. His attentions were now turned to the parents, whom he presented with an awl and a little tobacco, and having thus secured their good will, continued to smoke his pipe and watch the salmon. While thus seated near the threshold, an urchin of the

family approached the door, but catching a sight of the strange guest, ran off screaming with terror, and ensconced himself behind the long straw at the back of the hut.

Desirous to dispel entirely this timidity, and to open a trade with the simple inhabitants of the hut, who, he did not doubt, had furs somewhere concealed, the captain now drew forth that grand lure in the eyes of the savage, a pocket mirror. The sight of it was irresistible. After examining it for a long time with wonder and admiration, they produced a muskrat skin, and offered it in exchange. The captain shook his head; but purchased the skin for a couple of buttons—superfluous trinkets! as the worthy lord of the hovel had neither coat nor breeches on which to place them.

The mirror still continued the great object of desire, particularly in the eyes of the old housewife, who produced a pot of parched flour and a string of biscuit roots. These procured her some trifle in return; but could not command the purchase of the mirror. The salmon being now completely cooked, they all joined heartily in supper. A bounteous portion was deposited before the captain by the old woman, upon some fresh grass, which served instead of a platter; and never had he tasted a salmon boiled so completely to his fancy.

Supper being over, the captain lighted his pipe and passed it to his host, who, inhaling the smoke, puffed it through his nostrils so assiduously, that in a little while

his head manifested signs of confusion and dizziness. Being satisfied, by this time, of the kindly and companionable qualities of the captain, he became easy and communicative; and at length hinted something about exchanging beaver skins for horses. The captain at once offered to dispose of his steed, which stood fastened at the door. The bargain was soon concluded, whereupon the Indian, removing a pile of bushes under which his valuables were concealed, drew forth the number of skins agreed upon as the price.

Shortly afterwards, some of the captain's people coming up, he ordered another horse to be saddled, and mounting it took his departure from the hut, after distributing a few trifling presents among its simple inhabitants. During all the time of his visit, the little Indian girl had kept her large black eyes fixed upon him, almost without winking, watching every movement with awe and wonder; and as he rode off, remained gazing after him, motionless as a statue. Her father, however, delighted with his new acquaintance, mounted his newly purchased horse, and followed in the train of the captain, to whom he continued to be a faithful and useful adherent during his sojourn in the neighborhood.

The cowardly efforts of an evil conscience were evidenced in the conduct of one of the captain's men, who had been in the Californian expedition. During all their intercourse with the harmless people of this place, he had manifested uneasiness and anxiety. While his com-

panions mingled freely and joyously with the natives, he went about with a restless, suspicious look, scrutinizing every painted form and face, and starting often at the sudden approach of some meek and inoffensive savage, who regarded him with reverence as a superior being. Yet this was ordinarily a bold fellow, who never flinched from danger, nor turned pale at the prospect of a battle. At length he requested permission of Captain Bonneville to keep out of the way of these people entirely. Their striking resemblance, he said, to the people of Ogden's River, made him continually fear that some among them might have seen him in that expedition, and might seek an opportunity of revenge. Ever after this, while they remained in this neighborhood, he would skulk out of the way and keep aloof when any of the native inhabitants approached. "Such," observes Captain Bonneville, "is the effect of self-reproach, even upon the roving trapper in the wilderness, who has little else to fear than the stings of his own guilty conscience."

CHAPTER XLIV.

OUTFIT OF A TRAPPER.—RISKS TO WHICH HE IS SUBJECTED.—PARTNERSHIP OF TRAPPERS.—ENMITY OF INDIANS.—DISTANT SMOKE.—A COUNTRY ON FIRE.—GUN CREEK.—GRAND ROND.—FINE PASTURES.—PERPLEXITIES IN A SMOKY COUNTRY.—CONFLAGRATION OF FORESTS.

IT had been the intention of Captain Bonneville, in descending along Snake River, to scatter his trappers upon the smaller streams. In this way, a range of country is trapped by small detachments from a main body. The outfit of a trapper is generally a rifle, a pound of powder, and four pounds of lead, with a bullet mould, seven traps, an axe, a hatchet, a knife and awl, a camp kettle, two blankets, and, where supplies are plenty, seven pounds of flour. He has, generally, two or three horses, to carry himself, and his baggage and peltries. Two trappers commonly go together, for the purpose of mutual assistance and support; a larger party could not easily escape the eyes of the Indians. It is a service of peril, and even more so at present than formerly, since they have got into the habit of trafficking peltries with the traders, have learnt the value of the beaver, and look upon the trappers as poachers, who are

filching the riches from their streams and interfering with their market. They made no hesitation, therefore, to murder the solitary trapper, and thus destroy a competitor, while they possess themselves of his spoils. It is with regret we add, too, that this hostility has in many cases been instigated by traders, desirous of injuring their rivals, but who have themselves often reaped the fruits of the mischief they have sown.

When two trappers undertake any considerable stream, their mode of proceeding is to hide their horses in some lonely glen where they can graze unobserved. They then build a small hut, dig out a canoe from a cotton-wood tree, and in this poke along shore silently in the evening, and set their traps. These they revisit in the same silent way at daybreak. When they take any beaver, they bring it home, skin it, stretch the skin on sticks to dry, and feast upon the flesh. The body, hung up before the fire, turns by its own weight, and is roasted in a superior style; the tail is the trapper's titbit; it is cut off, put on the end of a stick, and toasted, and is considered even a greater dainty than the tongue or the marrow-bone of a buffalo.

With all their silence and caution, however, the poor trappers cannot always escape their hawk-eyed enemies. Their trail has been discovered, perhaps, and followed up for many a mile; or their smoke has been seen curling up out of the secret glen, or has been scented by the savages, whose sense of smell is almost as acute as that

of sight. Sometimes they are pounced upon when in the act of setting their traps; at other times, they are roused from their sleep by the horrid war-whoop; or, perhaps, have a bullet or an arrow whistling about their ears, in the midst of one of their beaver banquets. In this way they are picked off, from time to time, and nothing is known of them, until, perchance, their bones are found bleaching in some lonely ravine, or on the banks of some nameless stream, which from that time is called after them. Many of the small streams beyond the mountains thus perpetuate the names of unfortunate trappers that have been murdered on their banks.

A knowledge of these dangers deterred Captain Bonneville, in the present instance, from detaching small parties of trappers as he had intended; for his scouts brought him word that formidable bands of the Banneck Indians were lying on the Boisée and Payette Rivers, at no great distance, so that they would be apt to detect and cut off any stragglers. It behooved him, also, to keep his party together, to guard against any predatory attack upon the main body: he continued on his way, therefore, without dividing his forces. And fortunate it was that he did so; for in a little while, he encountered one of those phenomena of the western wilds that would effectually have prevented his scattered people from finding each other again. In a word, it was the season of setting fire to the prairies. As he advanced, he began to perceive great clouds of smoke at a distance, rising by de-

grees, and spreading over the whole face of the country. The atmosphere became dry and surcharged with murky vapor, parching to the skin, and irritating to the eyes. When travelling among the hills, they could scarcely discern objects at the distance of a few paces; indeed, the least exertion of the vision was painful. There was evidently some vast conflagration in the direction towards which they were proceeding; it was as yet at a great distance, and during the day they could only see the smoke rising in larger and denser volumes, and rolling forth in an immense canopy. At night, the skies were all glowing with the reflection of unseen fires; hanging in an immense body of lurid light, high above the horizon.

Having reached Gun Creek, an important stream coming from the left, Captain Bonneville turned up its course, to traverse the mountains and avoid the great bend of Snake River. Being now out of the range of the Bannecks, he sent out his people in all directions to hunt the antelope for present supplies; keeping the dried meats for places where game might be scarce.

During four days that the party were ascending Gun Creek, the smoke continued to increase so rapidly that it was impossible to distinguish the face of the country and ascertain landmarks. Fortunately the travellers fell upon an Indian trail, which led them to the head waters of the Fourche de Glace, or Ice River, sometimes called the Grand Rond. Here they found all the plains and valleys wrapped in one vast conflagration; which swept

over the long grass in billows of flame, shot up every bush and tree, rose in great columns from the groves, and sent up clouds of smoke that darkened the atmosphere. To avoid this sea of fire, the travellers had to pursue their course close along the foot of the mountains; but the irritation from the smoke continued to be tormenting.

The country about the head waters of the Grand Rond spreads out into broad and level prairies, extremely fertile, and watered by mountain springs and rivulets. These prairies are resorted to by small bands of the Skynses, to pasture their horses as well as to banquet upon the salmon which abound in the neighboring waters. They take these fish in great quantities and without the least difficulty; simply taking them out of the water with their hands, as they flounder and struggle in the numerous long shoals of the principal streams. At the time the travellers passed over these prairies, some of the narrow deep streams by which they were intersected were completely choked with salmon, which they took in great numbers. The wolves and bears frequent these streams at this season, to avail themselves of these great fisheries.

The travellers continued, for many days, to experience great difficulties and discomforts from this wide conflagration, which seemed to embrace the whole wilderness. The sun was for a great part of the time obscured by the smoke, and the loftiest mountains were hidden from view. Blundering along in this region of mist and uncertainty,

they were frequently obliged to make long circuits, to avoid obstacles which they could not perceive until close upon them. The Indian trails were their safest guides, for though they sometimes appeared to lead them out of their direct course, they always conducted them to the passes.

On the 26th of August they reached the head of the Way-lee-way River. Here, in a valley of the mountains through which this head water makes its way, they found a band of the Skynses, who were extremely sociable, and appeared to be well disposed, and as they spoke the Nez Percé language, an intercourse was easily kept up with them.

In the pastures on the bank of this stream, Captain Bonneville encamped for a time, for the purpose of recruiting the strength of his horses. Scouts were now sent out to explore the surrounding country, and search for a convenient pass through the mountains towards the Wallamut or Multnomah. After an absence of twenty days, they returned weary and discouraged. They had been harassed and perplexed in rugged mountain defiles, where their progress was continually impeded by rocks and precipices. Often they had been obliged to travel along the edges of frightful ravines, where a false step would have been fatal. In one of these passes, a horse fell from the brink of a precipice, and would have been dashed to pieces had he not lodged among the branches of a tree, from which he was extricated with great difficulty. These, however, were not the worst of their diffi-

culties and perils. The great conflagration of the country, which had harassed the main party in its march, was still more awful, the further this exploring party proceeded. The flames, which swept rapidly over the light vegetation of the prairies, assumed a fiercer character, and took a stronger hold amidst the wooded glens and ravines of the mountains. Some of the deep gorges and defiles sent up sheets of flame, and clouds of lurid smoke, and sparks and cinders, that in the night made them resemble the craters of volcanoes. The groves and forests, too, which crowned the cliffs, shot up their towering columns of fire, and added to the furnace glow of the mountains. With these stupendous sights were combined the rushing blasts caused by the rarefied air, which roared and howled through the narrow glens, and whirled forth the smoke and flames in impetuous wreaths. Ever and anon, too, was heard the crash of falling trees, sometimes tumbling from crags and precipices, with tremendous sounds.

In the daytime, the mountains were wrapped in smoke, so dense and blinding that the explorers, if by chance they separated, could only find each other by shouting. Often, too, they had to grope their way through the yet burning forests, in constant peril from the limbs and trunks of trees, which frequently fell across their path. At length they gave up the attempt to find a pass as hopeless, under actual circumstances, and made their way back to the camp to report their failure.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE SKYNSES—THEIR TRAFFIC—HUNTING—FOOD—HORSES.—A HORSE-RACE.—DEVOTIONAL FEELINGS OF THE SKYNSES, NES PERCÉS, AND FLATHEADS.—PRAYERS.—EXHORTATIONS.—A PREACHER ON HORSEBACK.—EFFECT OF RELIGION ON THE MANNERS OF THE TRIBES.—A NEW LIGHT.

URING the absence of this detachment, a sociable intercourse had been kept up between the main party and the Skynses, who had removed into the neighborhood of the camp. These people dwell about the waters of the Way-lee-way and the adjacent country, and trade regularly with the Hudson's Bay Company; generally giving horses in exchange for the articles of which they stand in need. They bring beaver skins, also, to the trading posts; not procured by trapping, but by a course of internal traffic with the shy and ignorant Shoshokoes and Too-el-icans, who keep in distant and unfrequented parts of the country, and will not venture near the trading houses. The Skynses hunt the deer and elk occasionally; and depend, for a part of the year, on fishing. Their main subsistence, however, is upon roots, especially the camash. This bulbous root is said to be of a delicious flavor, and highly nutritious. The women dig it up in great quantities, steam it, and

deposit it in caches for winter provisions. It grows spontaneously, and absolutely covers the plains.

This tribe were comfortably clad and equipped. They had a few rifles among them, and were extremely desirous of bartering for those of Captain Bonneville's men, offering a couple of good running horses for a light rifle. Their first-rate horses, however, were not to be procured from them on any terms. They almost invariably use ponies; but of a breed infinitely superior to any in the United States. They are fond of trying their speed and bottom, and of betting upon them.

As Captain Bonneville was desirous of judging of the comparative merit of their horses, he purchased one of their racers, and had a trial of speed between that, an American, and a Shoshonie, which were supposed to be well matched. The race-course was for the distance of one mile and a half out and back. For the first half mile, the American took the lead, by a few hands; but, losing his wind, soon fell far behind, leaving the Shoshonie and Skynse to contend together. For a mile and a half, they went head and head; but at the turn the Skynse took the lead, and won the race with great ease, scarce drawing a quick breath when all was over.

The Skynses, like the Nez Percés and the Flatheads, have a strong devotional feeling, which has been successfully cultivated by some of the resident personages of the Hudson's Bay Company. Sunday is invariably kept sacred among these tribes. They will not raise their

camp on that day, unless in extreme cases of danger or hunger: neither will they hunt, nor fish, nor trade, nor perform any kind of labor on that day. A part of it is passed in prayer and religious ceremonies. Some chief, who is generally, at the same time, what is called a "medicine man," assembles the community. After invoking blessings from the Deity, he addresses the assemblage; exhorting them to good conduct; to be diligent in providing for their families; to abstain from lying and stealing; to avoid quarrelling or cheating in their play, and to be just and hospitable to all strangers who may be among them. Prayers and exhortations are also made, early in the morning, on week days. Sometimes, all this is done by the chief, from horseback; moving slowly about the camp, with his hat on, and uttering his exhortations with a loud voice. On all occasions, the bystanders listen with profound attention; and at the end of every sentence respond one word in unison; apparently equivalent to an amen. While these prayers and exhortations are going on, every employment in the camp is suspended. If an Indian is riding by the place, he dismounts, holds his horse, and attends with reverence until all is done. When the chief has finished his prayer or exhortation, he says, "I have done," upon which there is a general exclamation in unison.

With these religious services, probably derived from the white men, the tribes above-mentioned mingle some of their old Indian ceremonials; such as dancing to the

cadence of a song or ballad, which is generally done in a large lodge provided for the purpose. Besides Sundays, they likewise observe the cardinal holidays of the Roman Catholic Church.

Whoever has introduced these simple forms of religion among these poor savages, has evidently understood their characters and capacities, and effected a great melioration of their manners. Of this we speak not merely from the testimony of Captain Bonneville, but, likewise, from that of Mr. Wyeth, who passed some months in a travelling camp of the Flatheads. "During the time I have been with them," says he, "I have never known an instance of theft among them: the least thing, even to a bead or pin, is brought to you, if found; and, often, things that have been thrown away. Neither have I known any quarrelling, nor lying. This absence of all quarrelling the more surprised me, when I came to see the various occasions that would have given rise to it among the whites: the crowding together of from twelve to eighteen hundred horses, which have to be driven into camp at night, to be picketed; to be packed in the morning; the gathering of fuel in places where it is extremely scanty. All this, however, is done without confusion or disturbance.

"They have a mild, playful, laughing disposition; and this is portrayed in their countenances. They are polite, and unobtrusive. When one speaks, the rest pay strict attention: when he is done, another assents by 'yes,' or

dissents by 'no;' and then states his reasons, which are listened to with equal attention. Even the children are more peaceable than other children. I never heard an angry word among them, nor any quarrelling, although there were, at least, five hundred of them together, and continually at play. With all this quietness of spirit, they are brave when put to the test; and are an overmatch for an equal number of Blackfeet."

The foregoing observations, though gathered from Mr. Wyeth as relative to the Flatheads, apply, in the main, to the Skynses also. Captain Bonneville, during his sojourn with the latter, took constant occasion, in conversing with their principal men, to encourage them in the cultivation of moral and religious habits; drawing a comparison between their peaceable and comfortable course of life, and that of other tribes, and attributing it to their superior sense of morality and religion. He frequently attended their religious services, with his people; always enjoining on the latter the most reverential deportment; and he observed that the poor Indians were always pleased to have the white men present.

The disposition of these tribes is evidently favorable to a considerable degree of civilization. A few farmers, settled among them, might lead them, Captain Bonneville thinks, to till the earth and cultivate grain; the country of the Skynses, and Nez Percés, is admirably adapted for the raising of cattle. A Christian missionary or two, and some trifling assistance from government,

to protect them from the predatory and warlike tribes, might lay the foundation of a Christian people in the midst of the great western wilderness, who would "wear the Americans near their hearts."

We must not omit to observe, however, in qualification of the sanctity of this Sabbath in the wilderness, that these tribes, who are all ardently addicted to gambling and horse-racing, make Sunday a peculiar day for recreations of the kind, not deeming them in any wise out of season. After prayers and pious ceremonials are over, there is scarce an hour in the day, says Captain Bonneville, that you do not see several horses racing at full speed; and in every corner of the camp, are groups of gamblers, ready to stake everything upon the all-absorbing game of "hand." The Indians, says Wyeth, appear to enjoy their amusements with more zest than the whites. They are great gamblers; and, in proportion to their means, play bolder, and bet higher than white men.

The cultivation of the religious feeling, above noted among the savages, has been, at times, a convenient policy with some of the more knowing traders, who have derived great credit and influence among them, by being considered "medicine men," that is, men gifted with mysterious knowledge. This feeling is, also, at times, played upon by religious charlatans; who are to be found in savage, as well as civilized life. One of these was noted by Wyeth, during his sojourn among the Flatheads. A new great man, says he, is rising in the camp,

who aims at power and sway. He covers his designs under the ample cloak of religion—inculcating some new doctrines and ceremonials among those who are more simple than himself. He has already made proselytes of one-fifth of the camp; beginning by working on the women, the children, and the weak-minded. His followers are all dancing on the plain, to their own vocal music. The more knowing ones of the tribe look on and laugh, thinking it all too foolish to do harm; but they will soon find that women, children, and fools, form a large majority of every community, and they will have eventually to follow the new light, or be considered among the profane. As soon as a preacher, or pseudo prophet of the kind gets followers enough, he either takes command of the tribe, or branches off and sets up for an independent chief and "medicine man."

CHAPTER XLVI.

SCARCITY IN THE CAMP.—REFUSAL OF SUPPLIES BY THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.—CONDUCT OF THE INDIANS.—A HUNGRY RETREAT.—JOHN DAY'S RIVER.—THE BLUE MOUNTAINS.—SALMON FISHING ON SNAKE RIVER.—MESSENGERS FROM THE CROW COUNTRY.—BEAR RIVER VALLEY.—IMMENSE MIGRATION OF BUFFALO.—DANGER OF BUFFALO HUNTING.—A WOUNDED INDIAN.—EUTAW INDIANS.—A "SURROUND" OF ANTELOPES.

PROVISIONS were now growing scanty in the camp, and Captain Bonneville found it necessary to seek a new neighborhood. Taking leave, therefore, of his friends, the Skynses, he set off to the westward, and, crossing a low range of mountains, encamped on the head waters of the Ottolais. Being now within thirty miles of Fort Wallah-Wallah, the trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, he sent a small detachment of men thither, to purchase corn for the subsistence of his party. The men were well received at the fort, but all supplies for their camp were promptly refused. Tempting offers were made them, however, if they would leave their present employ, and enter into the service of the company; but they were not to be seduced.

When Captain Bonneville saw his messengers return

empty-handed, he ordered an instant move, for there was imminent danger of famine. He pushed forward down the course of the Ottolais which runs diagonal to the Columbia, and falls into it about fifty miles below the Wallah-Wallah. His route lay through a beautiful undulating country, covered with horses belonging to the Skynses, who sent them there for pasturage.

On reaching the Columbia, Captain Bonneville hoped to open a trade with the natives, for fish and other provisions, but to his surprise, they kept aloof, and even hid themselves on his approach. He soon discovered that they were under the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had forbidden them to trade, or hold any communion with him. He proceeded along the Columbia, but it was everywhere the same; not an article of provisions was to be obtained from the natives, and he was, at length, obliged to kill a couple of his horses to sustain his famishing people. He now came to a halt, and consulted what was to be done. The broad and beautiful Columbia lay before them, smooth and unruffled as a mirror; a little more journeying would take them to its lower region; to the noble valley of the Wallamut, their projected winter-quarters. To advance under present circumstances would be to court starvation. The resources of the country were locked against them, by the influence of a jealous and powerful monopoly. If they reached the Wallamut, they could scarcely hope to obtain sufficient supplies for the winter; if they lingered

any longer in the country, the snows would gather upon the mountains and cut off their retreat. By hastening their return, they would be able to reach the Blue Mountains just in time to find the elk, the deer, and the bighorn; and after they had supplied themselves with provisions, they might push through the mountains, before they were entirely blocked up by snow. Influenced by these considerations, Captain Bonneville reluctantly turned his back a second time on the Columbia, and set off for the Blue Mountains. He took his course up John Day's River, so called from one of the hunters in the original Astorian enterprise. As famine was at his heels, he travelled fast, and reached the mountains by the 1st of October. He entered by the opening made by John Day's River; it was a rugged and difficult defile, but he and his men had become accustomed to hard scrambles of the kind. Fortunately, the September rains had extinguished the fires which recently spread over these regions; and the mountains, no longer wrapped in smoke, now revealed all their grandeur and sublimity to the eye.

They were disappointed in their expectation of finding abundant game in the mountains; large bands of the natives had passed through, returning from their fishing expeditions, and had driven all the game before them. It was only now and then that the hunters could bring in sufficient to keep the party from starvation.

To add to their distress, they mistook their route, and

wandered for ten days among high and bald hills of clay. At length, after much perplexity, they made their way to the banks of Snake River, following the course of which, they were sure to reach their place of destination.

It was the 20th of October when they found themselves once more upon this noted stream. The Shoshokoes, whom they had met with in such scanty numbers on their journey down the river, now absolutely thronged its banks to profit by the abundance of salmon, and lay up a stock for winter provisions. Scaffolds were everywhere erected, and immense quantities of fish drying upon them. At this season of the year, however, the salmon are extremely poor, and the travellers needed their keen sauce of hunger to give them a relish.

In some places the shores were completely covered with a stratum of dead salmon, exhausted in ascending the river, or destroyed at the falls; the fetid odor of which tainted the air.

It was not until the travellers reached the head waters of the Portneuf, that they really found themselves in a region of abundance. Here the buffalo were in immense herds; and here they remained for three days, slaying, and cooking, and feasting, and indemnifying themselves by an enormous carnival, for a long and hungry Lent. Their horses, too, found good pasturage, and enjoyed a little rest after a severe spell of hard travelling.

During this period, two horsemen arrived at the camp, who proved to be messengers sent express for supplies

from Montero's party; which had been sent to beat up the Crow country and the Black Hills, and to winter on the Arkansas. They reported that all was well with the party, but that they had not been able to accomplish the whole of their mission, and were still in the Crow country, where they should remain until joined by Captain Bonneville in the spring. The captain retained the messengers with him until the 17th of November, when, having reached the caches on Bear River, and procured thence the required supplies, he sent them back to their party; appointing a rendezvous towards the last of June following, on the forks of Wind River Valley, in the Crow country.

He now remained several days encamped near the caches, and having discovered a small band of Shoshonies in his neighborhood, purchased from them lodges, furs, and other articles of winter comfort, and arranged with them to encamp together during the winter.

The place designed by the captain for the wintering ground was on the upper part of Bear River, some distance off. He delayed approaching it as long as possible, in order to avoid driving off the buffalo, which would be needed for winter provisions. He accordingly moved forward but slowly, merely as the want of game and grass obliged him to shift his position. The weather had already become extremely cold, and the snow lay to a considerable depth. To enable the horses to carry as

much dried meat as possible, he caused a cache to be made, in which all the baggage that could be spared was deposited. This done, the party continued to move slowly towards their winter quarters.

They were not doomed, however, to suffer from scarcity during the present winter. The people upon Snake River having chased off the buffalo before the snow had become deep, immense herds now came trooping over the mountains; forming dark masses on their sides, from which their deep-mouthed bellowing sounded like the low peals and mutterings from a gathering thunder-cloud. In effect, the cloud broke, and down came the torrent thundering into the valley. It is utterly impossible, according to Captain Bonneville, to convey an idea of the effect produced by the sight of such countless throngs of animals of such bulk and spirit, all rushing forward as if swept on by a whirlwind.

The long privation which the travellers had suffered gave uncommon ardor to their present hunting. One of the Indians attached to the party, finding himself on horseback in the midst of the buffaloes, without either rifle, or bow and arrows, dashed after a fine cow that was passing close by him, and plunged his knife into her side with such lucky aim as to bring her to the ground. It was a daring deed; but hunger had made him almost desperate.

The buffaloes are sometimes tenacious of life, and must be wounded in particular parts. A ball striking

the shagged frontlet of a bull, produces no other effect than a toss of the head, and greater exasperation; on the contrary, a ball striking the forehead of a cow, is fatal. Several instances occurred during this great hunting bout, of bulls fighting furiously after having received mortal wounds. Wyeth, also, was witness to an instance of the kind while encamped with the Indians. During a grand hunt of the buffalo, one of the Indians pressed a bull so closely that the animal turned suddenly upon him. His horse stopped short, or started back, and threw him. Before he could rise, the bull rushed furiously upon him, and gored him in the chest, so that his breath came out at the aperture. He was conveyed back to the camp, and his wound was dressed. Giving himself up for slain, he called round him his friends, and made his will by word of mouth. It was something like a death chant, and at the end of every sentence those around responded in concord. He appeared no ways intimidated by the approach of death. "I think," adds Wyeth, "that the Indians die better than the white men; perhaps, from having less fear about the future."

The buffalo may be approached very near, if the hunter keeps to the leeward; but they are quick of scent, and will take the alarm and move off from a party of hunters, to the windward, even when two miles distant.

The vast herds which had poured down into the Bear River Valley, were now snow-bound, and remained in the neighborhood of the camp throughout the winter. This

furnished the trappers and their Indian friends a perpetual carnival; so that to slay and eat seemed to be the main occupations of the day. It is astonishing what loads of meat it requires to cope with the appetite of a hunting camp.

The ravens and wolves soon came in for their share of the good cheer. These constant attendants of the hunter gathered in vast numbers as the winter advanced. They might be completely out of sight, but at the report of a gun flights of ravens would immediately be seen hovering in the air, no one knew whence they came; while the sharp visages of the wolves would peep down from the brow of every hill, waiting for the hunter's departure, to pounce upon the carcass.

Beside the buffaloes, there were other neighbors snowbound in the valley, whose presence did not promise to be so advantageous. This was a band of Eutaw Indians, who were encamped higher up on the river. They are a poor tribe, that in a scale of the various tribes inhabiting these regions, would rank between the Shoshonies and the Shoshokoes or Root Diggers; though more bold and warlike than the latter. They have but few rifles among them, and are generally armed with bows and arrows.

As this band and the Shoshonies were at deadly feud, on account of old grievances, and as neither party stood in awe of the other, it was feared some bloody scenes might ensue. Captain Bonneville, therefore, undertook the office of pacificator, and sent to the Eutaw chiefs,

inviting them to a friendly smoke, in order to bring about a reconciliation. His invitation was proudly declined; whereupon he went to them in person, and succeeded in effecting a suspension of hostilities, until the chiefs of the two tribes could meet in council. The braves of the two rival camps sullenly acquiesced in the arrangement. They would take their seats upon the hill tops, and watch their quondam enemies hunting the buffalo in the plain below, and evidently repine, that their hands were tied up from a skirmish. The worthy captain, however, succeeded in carrying through his benevolent mediation. The chiefs met; the amicable pipe was smoked, the hatchet buried, and peace formally proclaimed. After this, both camps united and mingled in social intercourse. Private quarrels, however, would occasionally occur in hunting, about the division of the game, and blows would sometimes be exchanged over the carcass of a buffalo; but the chiefs wisely took no notice of these individual brawls.

One day, the scouts, who had been ranging the hills, brought news of several large herds of antelopes in a small valley at no great distance. This produced a sensation among the Indians, for both tribes were in ragged condition, and sadly in want of those shirts made of the skin of the antelope. It was determined to have "a surround," as the mode of hunting that animal is called. Everything now assumed an air of mystic solemnity and importance. The chiefs prepared their medicines or

charms, each according to his own method, or fancied inspiration, generally with the compound of certain simples; others consulted the entrails of animals which they had sacrificed, and thence drew favorable auguries. After much grave smoking and deliberating, it was at length proclaimed, that all who were able to lift a club, man, woman, or child, should muster for "the surround." When all had congregated, they moved in rude procession to the nearest point of the valley in question, and there halted. Another course of smoking and deliberating, of which the Indians are so fond, took place among the chiefs. Directions were then issued for the horsemen to make a circuit of about seven miles, so as to encompass the herd. When this was done, the whole mounted force dashed off, simultaneously, at full speed, shouting and yelling at the top of their voices. In a short space of time the antelopes, started from their hiding places, came bounding from all points into the valley. The riders now gradually contracting their circle, brought them nearer and nearer to the spot where the senior chief, surrounded by the elders, male and female, was seated in supervision of the chase. The antelopes, nearly exhausted with fatigue and fright, and bewildered by perpetual whooping, made no effort to break through the ring of the hunters, but ran round in small circles, until man, woman, and child beat them down with bludgeons. Such is the nature of that species of antelope hunting, technically called "a surround."

CHAPTER XLVII.

A FESTIVE WINTER.—CONVERSION OF THE SHOSHONIES.—VISIT OF TWO FREE TRAPPERS.—GAYETY IN THE CAMP.—A TOUCH OF THE TENDER PASSION.—THE RECLAIMED SQUAW.—AN INDIAN FINE LADY.—AN ELOPEMENT.—A PURSUIT.—MARKET VALUE OF A BAD WIFE.

GAME continued to abound throughout the winter; and the camp was overstocked with provisions. Beef and venison, humps and haunches, buffalo tongues and marrow-bones, were constantly cooking at every fire; and the whole atmosphere was redolent with the savory fumes of roast meat. It was, indeed, a continual "feast of fat things," and though there might be a lack of "wine upon the lees," yet, we have shown that a substitute was occasionally to be found in honey and alcohol.

Both the Shoshonies and the Eutaws conducted themselves with great propriety. It is true, they now and then filched a few trifles from their good friends, the Big Hearts, when their backs were turned; but then, they always treated them, to their faces, with the utmost deference and respect; and good-humoredly vied with the trappers in all kinds of feats of activity and mirthful sports. The two tribes maintained towards each other,

also, a friendliness of aspect, which gave Captain Bonneville reason to hope that all past animosity was effectually buried.

The two rival bands, however, had not long been mingled in this social manner, before their ancient jealousy began to break out, in a new form. The senior chief of the Shoshonies was a thinking man, and a man of observation. He had been among the Nez Percés, listened to their new code of morality and religion received from the white men, and attended their devotional exercises. He had observed the effect of all this, in elevating the tribe in the estimation of the white men; and determined, by the same means, to gain for his own tribe a superiority over their ignorant rivals, the Eutaws. He accordingly assembled his people, and promulgated among them the mongrel doctrines and form of worship of the Nez Percés; recommending the same to their adoption. The Shoshonies were struck with the novelty, at least, of the measure, and entered into it with spirit. They began to observe Sundays and holidays, and to have their devotional dances, and chants, and other ceremonials, about which the ignorant Eutaws knew nothing; while they exerted their usual competition in shooting and horse-racing, and the renowned game of hand.

Matters were going on thus pleasantly and prosperously, in this motley community of white and red men, when, one morning, two stark free trappers, arrayed in the height of savage finery, and mounted on steeds as fine and

as fiery as themselves, and all jingling with hawk's bells, came galloping, with whoop and halloo, into the camp.

They were fresh from the winter encampment of the American Fur Company, in the Green River Valley; and had come to pay their old comrades of Captain Bonneville's company a visit. An idea may be formed, from the scenes we have already given of conviviality in the wilderness, of the manner in which these game birds were received by those of their feather in the camp; what feasting, what reveling, what boasting, what bragging, what ranting and roaring, and racing and gambling, and squabbling and fighting, ensued among these boon companions. Captain Bonneville, it is true, maintained always a certain degree of law and order in his camp, and checked each fierce excess; but the trappers, in their seasons of idleness and relaxation, require a degree of license and indulgence, to repay them for the long privations, and almost incredible hardships of their periods of active service.

In the midst of all this feasting and frolicking, a freak of the tender passion intervened, and wrought a complete change in the scene. Among the Indian beauties in the camp of the Eutaws and Shoshonies, the free trappers discovered two, who had whilom figured as their squaws. These connections frequently take place for a season, and sometimes continue for years, if not perpetually; but are apt to be broken when the free trapper starts off, suddenly, on some distant and rough expedition.

In the present instance, these wild blades were anxious to regain their belles; nor were the latter loath once more to come under their protection. The free trapper combines, in the eye of an Indian girl, all that is dashing and heroic in a warrior of her own race, whose gait, and garb, and bravery he emulates, with all that is gallant and glorious in the white man. And then the indulgence with which he treats her, the finery in which he decks her out, the state in which she moves, the sway she enjoys over both his purse and person, instead of being the drudge and slave of an Indian husband; obliged to carry his pack, and build his lodge, and make his fire, and bear his cross humors and dry blows.—No; there is no comparison, in the eyes of an aspiring belle of the wilderness, between a free trapper and an Indian brave.

With respect to one of the parties, the matter was easily arranged. The beauty in question was a pert little Eutaw wench, that had been taken prisoner, in some war excursion, by a Shoshonie. She was readily ransomed for a few articles of trifling value; and forthwith figured about the camp in fine array, "with rings on her fingers and bells on her toes," and a tossed-up coquettish air, that made her the envy, admiration, and abhorrence of all the leathern-dressed, hard-working squaws of her acquaintance.

As to the other beauty, it was quite a different matter. She had become the wife of a Shoshonie brave. It is true, he had another wife, of older date than the one in

question: who, therefore, took command in his household, and treated his new spouse as a slave; but the latter was the wife of his last fancy, his latest caprice; and was precious in his eyes. All attempt to bargain with him, therefore, was useless; the very proposition was repulsed with anger and disdain. The spirit of the trapper was roused, his pride was piqued as well as his passion. He endeavored to prevail upon his quondam mistress to elope with him. His horses were fleet, the winter nights were long and dark, before daylight they would be beyond the reach of pursuit; and once at the encampment in Green River Valley, they might set the whole band of Shoshonies at defiance.

The Indian girl listened and longed. Her heart yearned after the ease and splendor of condition of a trapper's bride, and throbbed to be freed from the capricious control of a premier squaw; but she dreaded the failure of the plan, and the fury of a Shoshonie husband. They parted; the Indian girl in tears, and the madcap trapper more mad than ever, with his thwarted passion.

Their interviews had, probably, been detected, and the jealousy of the Shoshonie brave aroused: a clamor of angry voices was heard in his lodge, with the sound of blows, and of female weeping and lamenting. At night, as the trapper lay tossing on his pallet, a soft voice whispered at the door of his lodge. His mistress stood trembling before him. She was ready to follow whithersoever he should lead.

In an instant, he was up and out. He had two prime horses, sure, and swift of foot, and of great wind. With stealthy quiet, they were brought up and saddled; and, in a few moments, he and his prize were careering over the snow, with which the whole country was covered. In the eagerness of escape, they had made no provision for their journey; days must elapse before they could reach their haven of safety, and mountains and prairies be traversed, wrapped in all the desolation of winter. For the present, however, they thought of nothing but flight; urging their horses forward over the dreary wastes, and fancying, in the howling of every blast, they heard the yell of the pursuer.

At early dawn, the Shoshonie became aware of his loss. Mounting his swiftest horse, he set off in hot pursuit. He soon found the trail of the fugitives, and spurred on in hopes of overtaking them. The winds, however, which swept the valley, had drifted the light snow into the prints made by the horses' hoofs. In a little while he lost all trace of them, and was completely thrown out of the chase. He knew, however, the situation of the camp toward which they were bound, and a direct course through the mountains, by which he might arrive there sooner than the fugitives. Through the most rugged defiles, therefore, he urged his course by day and night, scarce pausing until he reached the camp. It was some time before the fugitives made their appearance. Six days had they been traversing the wintry

wilds. They came, haggard with hunger and fatigue, and their horses faltering under them. The first object that met their eyes, on entering the camp, was the Shoshonie brave. He rushed, knife in hand, to plunge it in the heart that had proved false to him. The trapper threw himself before the cowering form of his mistress, and, exhausted as he was, prepared for a deadly struggle. The Shoshonie paused. His habitual awe of the white man checked his arm; the trapper's friends crowded to the spot, and arrested him. A parley ensued. A kind of *crim. con.* adjudication took place; such as frequently occurs in civilized life. A couple of horses were declared to be a fair compensation for the loss of a woman who had previously lost her heart; with this, the Shoshonie brave was fain to pacify his passion. He returned to Captain Bonneville's camp, somewhat crest-fallen, it is true; but parried the officious condolements of his friends, by observing, that two good horses were very good pay for one bad wife.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

BREAKING UP OF WINTER QUARTERS.—MOVE TO GREEN RIVER.—A TRAPPER AND HIS RIFLE.—AN ARRIVAL IN CAMP.—A FREE TRAPPER AND HIS SQUAW IN DISTRESS.—STORY OF A BLACKFOOT BELLE.

THE winter was now breaking up, the snows were melted from the hills, and from the lower parts of the mountains, and the time for decamping had arrived. Captain Bonneville dispatched a party to the caches, who brought away all the effects concealed there, and on the 1st of April (1835), the camp was broken up, and every one on the move. The white men and their allies, the Eutaws and Shoshonies, parted with many regrets and sincere expressions of good-will, for their intercourse throughout the winter had been of the most friendly kind.

Captain Bonneville and his party passed by Ham's Fork, and reached the Colorado, or Green River, without accident, on the banks of which they remained during the residue of the spring. During this time, they were conscious that a band of hostile Indians were hovering about their vicinity, watching for an opportunity to slay or steal; but the vigilant precautions of Captain Bonne-

ville baffled all their maneuvers. In such dangerous times, the experienced mountaineer is never without his rifle, even in camp. On going from lodge to lodge to visit his comrades, he takes it with him. On seating himself in a lodge, he lays it beside him, ready to be snatched up; when he goes out, he takes it up as regularly as a citizen would his walking staff. His rifle is his constant friend and protector.

On the 10th of June, the party were a little to the east of the Wind River Mountains, where they halted for a time in excellent pasturage, to give their horses a chance to recruit their strength for a long journey; for it was Captain Bonneville's intention to shape his course to the settlements; having already been detained by the complication of his duties, and by various losses and impediments, far beyond the time specified in his leave of absence.

While the party was thus reposing in the neighborhood of the Wind River Mountains, a solitary free trapper rode one day into the camp, and accosted Captain Bonneville. He belonged, he said, to a party of thirty hunters, who had just passed through the neighborhood, but whom he had abandoned in consequence of their ill treatment of a brother trapper; whom they had cast off from their party, and left with his bag and baggage, and an Indian wife into the bargain, in the midst of a desolate prairie. The horseman gave a piteous account of the situation of this helpless pair, and solicited the

loan of horses to bring them and their effects to the camp.

The captain was not a man to refuse assistance to any one in distress, especially when there was a woman in the case; horses were immediately dispatched, with an escort, to aid the unfortunate couple. The next day, they made their appearance with all their effects: the man, a stalwart mountaineer, with a peculiarly game look; the woman, a young Blackfoot beauty, arrayed in the trappings and trinketry of a free trapper's bride.

Finding the woman to be quick-witted and communicative, Captain Bonneville entered into conversation with her, and obtained from her many particulars concerning the habits and customs of her tribe; especially their wars and huntings. They pride themselves upon being the "best legs of the mountains," and hunt the buffalo on foot. This is done in spring-time, when the frosts have thawed and the ground is soft. The heavy buffalo then sink over their hoofs at every step, and are easily overtaken by the Blackfeet; whose fleet steps press lightly on the surface. It is said, however, that the buffalo on the Pacific side of the Rocky Mountains are fleeter and more active than on the Atlantic side; those upon the plains of the Columbia can scarcely be overtaken by a horse that would outstrip the same animal in the neighborhood of the Platte, the usual hunting ground of the Blackfeet. In the course of further conversation, Captain Bonneville drew from the Indian woman her

whole story; which gave a picture of savage life, and of the drudgery and hardships to which an Indian wife is subject.

"I was the wife," said she, "of a Blackfoot warrior, and I served him faithfully. Who was so well served as he? Whose lodge was so well provided, or kept so clean? I brought wood in the morning, and placed water always at hand. I watched for his coming; and he found his meat cooked and ready. If he rose to go forth, there was nothing to delay him. I searched the thought that was in his heart, to save him the trouble of speaking. When I went abroad on errands for him, the chiefs and warriors smiled upon me, and the young braves spoke soft things, in secret; but my feet were in the straight path, and my eyes could see nothing but him.

"When he went out to hunt, or to war, who aided to equip him, but I? When he returned, I met him at the door; I took his gun; and he entered without further thought. While he sat and smoked, I unloaded his horses; tied them to the stakes; brought in their loads, and was quickly at his feet. If his moccasins were wet, I took them off and put on others which were dry and warm. I dressed all the skins he had taken in the chase. He could never say to me, why is it not done? He hunted the deer, the antelope, and the buffalo, and he watched for the enemy. Everything else was done by me. When our people moved their camp, he mounted his horse and rode away; free as though he had fallen

from the skies. He had nothing to do with the labor of the camp; it was I that packed the horses, and led them on the journey. When we halted in the evening, and he sat with the other braves and smoked, it was I that pitched his lodge; and when he came to eat and sleep, his supper and his bed were ready.

"I served him faithfully; and what was my reward? A cloud was always on his brow, and sharp lightning on his tongue. I was his dog; and not his wife.

"Who was it that scarred and bruised me? It was he. My brother saw how I was treated. His heart was big for me. He begged me to leave my tyrant and fly. Where could I go? If retaken, who would protect me? My brother was not a chief; he could not save me from blows and wounds, perhaps death. At length I was persuaded. I followed my brother from the village. He pointed the way to the Nez Percés, and bade me go and live in peace among them. We parted. On the third day I saw the lodges of the Nez Percés before me. I paused for a moment, and had no heart to go on; but my horse neighed, and I took it as a good sign, and suffered him to gallop forward. In a little while I was in the midst of the lodges. As I sat silent on my horse, the people gathered round me, and inquired whence I came. I told my story. A chief now wrapped his blanket close around him, and bade me dismount. I obeyed. He took my horse to lead him away. My heart grew small within me. I felt, on parting with my horse, as if my last friend was gone.

I had no words, and my eyes were dry. As he led off my horse, a young brave stepped forward. 'Are you a chief of the people?' cried he. 'Do we listen to you in council, and follow you in battle? Behold! a stranger flies to our camp from the dogs of Blackfeet, and asks protection. Let shame cover your face! The stranger is a woman, and alone. If she were a warrior, or had a warrior by her side, your heart would not be big enough to take her horse. But he is yours. By the right of war you may claim him; but look!'—his bow was drawn, and the arrow ready!—'you never shall cross his back!' The arrow pierced the heart of the horse, and he fell dead.

"An old woman said she would be my mother. She led me to her lodge: my heart was thawed by her kindness, and my eyes burst forth with tears; like the frozen fountains in spring-time. She never changed; but as the days passed away, was still a mother to me. The people were loud in praise of the young brave, and the chief was ashamed. I lived in peace.

"A party of trappers came to the village, and one of them took me for his wife. This is he. I am very happy; he treats me with kindness, and I have taught him the language of my people. As we were travelling this way, some of the Blackfeet warriors beset us, and carried off the horses of the party. We followed, and my husband held a parley with them. The guns were laid down, and the pipe was lighted; but some of the white

men attempted to seize the horses by force, and then a battle began. The snow was deep; the white men sank into it at every step; but the red men, with their snow-shoes, passed over the surface like birds, and drove off many of the horses in sight of their owners. With those that remained we resumed our journey. At length words took place between the leader of the party and my husband. He took away our horses, which had escaped in the battle, and turned us from his camp. My husband had one good friend among the trappers. That is he (pointing to the man who had asked assistance for them). He is a good man. His heart is big. When he came in from hunting, and found that we had been driven away, he gave up all his wages, and followed us, that he might speak good words for us to the white captain."

CHAPTER XLIX.

A RENDEZVOUS AT WIND RIVER.—CAMPAIGN OF MONTERO AND HIS BRIGADE IN THE CROW COUNTRY.—WARS BETWEEN THE CROWS AND BLACKFEET.—DEATH OF ARAPOOISH.—BLACKFEET LURKERS.—SAGACITY OF THE HORSE.—DEPENDENCE OF THE HUNTER ON HIS HORSE.—RETURN TO THE SETTLEMENTS.

N the 22d of June, Captain Bonneville raised his camp, and moved to the forks of Wind River; the appointed place of rendezvous. In a few days, he was joined there by the brigade of Montero, which had been sent, in the preceding year, to beat up the Crow country, and afterwards proceed to the Arkansas. Montero had followed the early part of his instructions; after trapping upon some of the upper streams, he proceeded to Powder River. Here he fell in with the Crow villages or bands, who treated him with unusual kindness, and prevailed upon him to take up his winter-quarters among them.

The Crows, at that time, were struggling almost for existence with their old enemies, the Blackfeet; who, in the past year, had picked off the flower of their warriors in various engagements, and among the rest, Arapooish, the friend of the white men. That sagacious and magnan-

imous chief had beheld, with grief, the ravages which war was making in his tribe, and that it was declining in force, and must eventually be destroyed, unless some signal blow could be struck to retrieve its fortunes. In a pitched battle of the two tribes, he made a speech to his warriors, urging them to set everything at hazard in one furious charge; which done, he led the way into the thickest of the foe. He was soon separated from his men, and fell covered with wounds, but his self-devotion was not in vain. The Blackfeet were defeated; and from that time the Crows plucked up fresh heart, and were frequently successful.

Montero had not been long encamped among them, when he discovered that the Blackfeet were hovering about the neighborhood. One day the hunters came galloping into the camp, and proclaimed that a band of the enemy was at hand. The Crows flew to arms, leaped on their horses, and dashed out in squadrons in pursuit. They overtook the retreating enemy in the midst of a plain. A desperate fight ensued. The Crows had the advantage of numbers, and of fighting on horseback. The greater part of the Blackfeet were slain; the remnant took shelter in a close thicket of willows, where the horse could not enter; whence they plied their bows vigorously.

The Crows drew off out of bow-shot, and endeavored, by taunts and bravadoes, to draw the warriors out of their retreat. A few of the best-mounted among them,

rode apart from the rest. One of their number then advanced alone, with that martial air and equestrian grace for which the tribe is noted. When within an arrow's flight of the thicket, he loosened his rein, urged his horse to full speed, threw his body on the opposite side, so as to hang by but one leg, and present no mark to the foe, in this way, he swept along in front of the thicket, launching his arrows from under the neck of his steed. Then regaining his seat in the saddle, he wheeled round, and returned whooping and scoffing to his companions, who received him with yells of applause.

Another and another horseman repeated this exploit; but the Blackfeet were not to be taunted out of their safe shelter. The victors feared to drive desperate men to extremities, so they forbore to attempt the thicket. Towards night they gave over the attack, and returned all-glorious with the scalps of the slain. Then came on the usual feasts and triumphs; the scalp-dance of warriors round the ghastly trophies, and all the other fierce revelry of barbarous warfare. When the braves had finished with the scalps, they were, as usual, given up to the women and children, and made the objects of new parades and dances. They were then treasured up as invaluable trophies and decorations by the braves who had won them.

It is worthy of note, that the scalp of a white man, either through policy or fear, is treated with more charity than that of an Indian. The warrior who won it is

entitled to his triumph if he demands it. In such case, the war party alone dance round the scalp. It is then taken down, and the shagged frontlet of a buffalo substituted in its place, and abandoned to the triumphs and insults of the million.

To avoid being involved in these guerillas, as well as to escape from the extremely social intercourse of the Crows, which began to be oppressive, Montero moved to the distance of several miles from their camps, and there formed a winter cantonment of huts. He now maintained a vigilant watch at night. Their horses, which were turned loose to graze during the day, under heedful eyes, were brought in at night, and shut up in strong pens, built of large logs of cotton-wood.

The snows, during a portion of the winter, were so deep that the poor animals could find but little sustenance. Here and there a tuft of grass would peer above the snow; but they were in general driven to browse the twigs and tender branches of the trees. When they were turned out in the morning, the first moments of freedom from the confinement of the pen were spent in frisking and gamboling. This done, they went soberly and sadly to work, to glean their scanty subsistence for the day. In the meantime, the men stripped the bark of the cotton-wood tree for the evening fodder. As the poor horses would return towards night, with sluggish and dispirited air, the moment they saw their owners approaching them with blankets filled with cotton-wood bark, their whole

demeanor underwent a change. A universal neighing and capering took place; they would rush forward, smell to the blankets, paw the earth, snort, whinny and prance round with head and tail erect, until the blankets were opened, and the welcome provender spread before them. These evidences of intelligence and gladness were frequently recounted by the trappers as proving the sagacity of the animal.

These veteran rovers of the mountains look upon their horses as in some respects gifted with almost human intellect. An old and experienced trapper, when mounting guard about the camp in dark nights and times of peril, gives heedful attention to all the sounds and signs of the horses. No enemy enters nor approaches the camp without attracting their notice, and their movements not only give a vague alarm, but, it is said, will even indicate to the knowing trapper the very quarter whence danger threatens.

In the day-time, too, while a hunter is engaged on the prairie, cutting up the deer or buffalo he has slain, he depends upon his faithful horse as a sentinel. The sagacious animal sees and smells all round him, and by his starting and whinnying, gives notice of the approach of strangers. There seems to be a dumb communion and fellowship, a sort of fraternal sympathy, between the hunter and his horse. They mutually rely upon each other for company and protection; and nothing is more difficult, it is said, than to surprise an experienced hunter

on the prairie, while his old and favorite steed is at his side.

Montero had not long removed his camp from the vicinity of the Crows, and fixed himself in his new quarters, when the Blackfeet marauders discovered his cantonment, and began to haunt the vicinity. He kept up a vigilant watch, however, and foiled every attempt of the enemy, who, at length, seemed to have given up in despair, and abandoned the neighborhood. The trappers relaxed their vigilance, therefore, and one night, after a day of severe labor, no guards were posted, and the whole camp was soon asleep. Towards midnight, however, the lightest sleepers were aroused by the trampling of hoofs; and, giving the alarm, the whole party were immediately on their legs, and hastened to the pens. The bars were down; but no enemy was to be seen or heard, and the horses being all found hard by, it was supposed the bars had been left down through negligence. All were once more asleep, when, in about an hour, there was a second alarm, and it was discovered that several horses were missing. The rest were mounted, and so spirited a pursuit took place, that eighteen of the number carried off were regained, and but three remained in possession of the enemy. Traps, for wolves, had been set about the camp the preceding day. In the morning, it was discovered that a Blackfoot was entrapped by one of them, but had succeeded in dragging it off. His trail was followed for a long distance, which he must have limped

alone. At length, he appeared to have fallen in with some of his comrades, who had relieved him from his painful incumbrance.

These were the leading incidents of Montero's campaign in the Crow country. The united parties now celebrated the 4th of July, in rough hunters' style, with hearty conviviality; after which Captain Bonneville made his final arrangements. Leaving Montero with a brigade of trappers to open another campaign, he put himself at the head of the residue of his men, and set off on his return to civilized life. We shall not detail his journey along the course of the Nebraska, and so from point to point of the wilderness, until he and his band reached the frontier settlements on the 22d of August.

Here, according to his own account, his cavalcade might have been taken for a procession of tatterdemalion savages; for the men were ragged almost to nakedness, and had contracted a wildness of aspect during three years of wandering in the wilderness. A few hours in a populous town, however, produced a magical metamorphosis. Hats of the most ample brim and longest nap; coats with buttons that shone like mirrors, and pantaloons of the most ample plenitude, took place of the well-worn trapper's equipments; and the happy wearers might be seen strolling about in all directions, scattering their silver like sailors just from a cruise.

The worthy captain, however, seems by no means to have shared the excitement of his men, on finding him-

self once more in the thronged resorts of civilized life, but, on the contrary, to have looked back to the wilderness with regret. "Though the prospect," says he, "of once more tasting the blessings of peaceful society, and passing days and nights under the calm guardianship of the laws, was not without its attractions; yet to those of us whose whole lives had been spent in the stirring excitement and perpetual watchfulness of adventures in the wilderness, the change was far from promising an increase of that contentment and inward satisfaction most conducive to happiness. He who, like myself, has roved almost from boyhood among the children of the forest, and over the unfurrowed plains and rugged heights of the western wastes, will not be startled to learn that, notwithstanding all the fascinations of the world on this civilized side of the mountains, I would fain make my bow to the splendors and gayeties of the metropolis, and plunge again amidst the hardships and perils of the wilderness."

We have only to add, that the affairs of the captain have been satisfactorily arranged with the War Department, and that he is actually in service at Fort Gibson, on our western frontier; where we hope he may meet with further opportunities of indulging his peculiar tastes, and of collecting graphic and characteristic details of the great western wilds and their motley inhabitants.

We here close our picturings of the Rocky Mountains

and their wild inhabitants, and of the wild life that prevails there; which we have been anxious to fix on record, because we are aware that this singular state of things is full of mutation, and must soon undergo great changes, if not entirely pass away. The fur trade, itself, which has given life to all this portraiture, is essentially evanescent. Rival parties of trappers soon exhaust the streams, especially when competition renders them heedless and wasteful of the beaver. The fur-bearing animals extinct, a complete change will come over the scene: the gay free trapper and his steed, decked out in wild array, and tinkling with bells and trinketry; the savage war chief, plumed and painted, and ever on the prowl; the traders' cavalcade, winding through defiles or over naked plains, with the stealthy war party lurking on its trail; the buffalo chase, the hunting camp, the mad carouse in the midst of danger, the night attack, the stampado, the scamper, the fierce skirmish among rocks and cliffs,—all this romance of savage life, which yet exists among the mountains, will then exist but in frontier story, and seem like the fiction of chivalry or fairy tale.

Some new system of things, or rather some new modification, will succeed among the roving people of this vast wilderness; but just as opposite, perhaps, to the habitudes of civilization. The great Chippewyan chain of mountains, and the sandy and volcanic plains which extend on either side, are represented as incapable of cultivation. The pasturage, which prevails there during

a certain portion of the year, soon withers under the aridity of the atmosphere, and leaves nothing but dreary wastes. An immense belt of rocky mountains and volcanic plains, several hundred miles in width, must ever remain an irreclaimable wilderness, intervening between the abodes of civilization, and affording a last refuge to the Indian. Here roving tribes of hunters, living in tents or lodges, and following the migrations of the game, may lead a life of savage independence, where there is nothing to tempt the cupidity of the white man. The amalgamation of various tribes, and of white men of every nation, will in time produce hybrid races like the mountain Tartars of the Caucasus. Possessed as they are of immense droves of horses, should they continue their present predatory and warlike habits, they may, in time, become a scourge to the civilized frontiers on either side of the mountains; as they are at present a terror to the traveller and trader.

The facts disclosed in the present work, clearly manifest the policy of establishing military posts and a mounted force to protect our traders in their journeys across the great western wilds, and of pushing the outposts into the very heart of the singular wilderness we have laid open, so as to maintain some degree of sway over the country, and to put an end to the kind of "black mail," levied on all occasions by the savage "chivalry of the mountains."

APPENDIX.

NATHANIEL J. WYETH, AND THE TRADE OF THE FAR WEST.

WE have brought Captain Bonneville to the end of his western campaigning; yet we cannot close this work without subjoining some particulars concerning the fortunes of his contemporary, Mr. Wyeth; anecdotes of whose enterprise have, occasionally, been interwoven in the party-colored web of our narrative. Wyeth effected his intention of establishing a trading post on the Portneuf, which he named Fort Hall. Here, for the first time, the American flag was unfurled to the breeze that sweeps the great naked wastes of the central wilderness. Leaving twelve men here, with a stock of goods, to trade with the neighboring tribes, he prosecuted his journey to the Columbia; where he established another post, called Fort Williams, on Wappatoo Island, at the mouth of the Wallamut. This was to be the head factory of his company; whence they were to carry on their fishing and trapping operations, and their trade with the interior; and where they were to receive and dispatch their annual ship.

The plan of Mr. Wyeth appears to have been well concerted. He had observed that the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, the bands of free trappers, as well as the Indians west of the mountains, depended for their supplies upon goods brought from St. Louis; which, in consequence of the expenses and risks of a long land carriage, were furnished them at an immense advance on first cost. He had an idea that they

might be much more cheaply supplied from the Pacific side. Horses would cost much less on the borders of the Columbia than at St. Louis: the transportation by land was much shorter, and through a country much more safe from the hostility of savage tribes, which, on the route from and to St. Louis, annually cost the lives of many men. On this idea he grounded his plan. He combined the salmon fishery with the fur trade. A fortified trading post was to be established on the Columbia, to carry on a trade with the natives for salmon and peltries, and to fish and trap on their own account. Once a year, a ship was to come from the United States, to bring out goods for the interior trade, and to take home the salmon and furs which have been collected. Part of the goods, thus brought out, were to be dispatched to the mountains, to supply the trapping companies and the Indian tribes, in exchange for their furs; which were to be brought down to the Columbia, to be sent home in the next annual ship: and thus an annual round was to be kept up. The profits on the salmon, it was expected, would cover all the expenses of the ship; so that the goods brought out, and the furs carried home, would cost nothing as to freight.

His enterprise was prosecuted with a spirit, intelligence, and perseverance, that merited success. All the details that we have met with, prove him to be no ordinary man. He appears to have the mind to conceive, and the energy to execute extensive and striking plans. He had once more reared the American flag in the lost domains of Astoria; and had he been enabled to maintain the footing he had so gallantly effected, he might have regained for his country the opulent trade of the Columbia, of which our statesmen have negligently suffered us to be dispossessed.

It is needless to go into a detail of the variety of accidents and cross-purposes, which caused the failure of his scheme. They were such as all undertakings of the kind, involving combined operations by sea and land, are liable to. What he most wanted, was sufficient capital to enable him to endure incipient obstacles and losses; and to hold on until success had time to spring up from the midst of disastrous experiments.

It is with extreme regret we learn that he has recently been compelled

to dispose of his establishment at Wappatoo Island, to the Hudson's Bay Company; who, it is but justice to say, have, according to his own account, treated him throughout the whole of his enterprise, with great fairness, friendship, and liberality. That company, therefore, still maintains an unrivaled sway over the whole country washed by the Columbia and its tributaries. It has, in fact, as far as its chartered powers permit, followed out the splendid scheme contemplated by Mr. Astor, when he founded his establishment at the mouth of the Columbia. From their emporium of Vancouver, companies are sent forth in every direction, to supply the interior posts, to trade with the natives, and to trade upon the various streams. These thread the rivers, traverse the plains, penetrate to the heart of the mountains, extend their enterprise northward, to the Russian possessions, and southward, to the confines of California. Their yearly supplies are received by sea, at Vancouver; and thence their furs and peltries are shipped to London. They likewise maintain a considerable commerce, in wheat and lumber, with the Pacific islands, and to the north, with the Russian settlements.

Though the company, by treaty, have a right to a participation only, in the trade of these regions, and are, in fact, but tenants on sufferance; yet have they quietly availed themselves of the original oversight, and subsequent supineness of the American government, to establish a monopoly of the trade of the river and its dependencies; and are adroitly proceeding to fortify themselves in their usurpation, by securing all the strong points of the country.

Fort George, originally Astoria, which was abandoned on the removal of the main factory to Vancouver, was renewed in 1830; and is now kept up as a fortified post and trading house. All the places accessible to shipping have been taken possession of, and posts recently established at them by the company.

The great capital of this association; their long established system; their hereditary influence over the Indian tribes; their internal organization, which makes everything go on with the regularity of a machine; and the low wages of their people, who are mostly Canadians, give them

great advantages over the American traders: nor is it likely the latter will ever be able to maintain any footing in the land, until the question of territorial right is adjusted between the two countries. The sooner that takes place, the better. It is a question too serious to national pride, if not to national interest, to be slurred over; and every year is adding to the difficulties which environ it.

The fur trade, which is now the main object of enterprise west of the Rocky Mountains, forms but a part of the real resources of the country. Beside the salmon fishery of the Columbia, which is capable of being rendered a considerable source of profit; the great valleys of the lower country, below the elevated volcanic plateau, are calculated to give sustenance to countless flocks and herds, and to sustain a great population of graziers and agriculturists.

Such, for instance, is the beautiful valley of the Wallamut; from which the establishment at Vancouver draws most of its supplies. Here, the company holds mills and farms; and has provided for some of its superannuated officers and servants. This valley, above the falls, is about fifty miles wide, and extends a great distance to the south. The climate is mild, being sheltered by lateral ranges of mountains; while the soil, for richness, has been equaled to the best of the Missouri lands. The valley of the river Des Chutes, is also admirably calculated for a great grazing country. All the best horses used by the company for the mountains, are raised there. The valley is of such happy temperature, that grass grows there throughout the year, and cattle may be left out to pasture during the winter. These valleys must form the grand points of commencement of the future settlement of the country; but there must be many such, enfolded in the embraces of these lower ranges of mountains, which, though at present they lie waste and uninhabited, and, to the eye of the trader and trapper, present but barren wastes, would, in the hands of skillful agriculturists and husbandmen, soon assume a different aspect, and teem with waving crops, or be covered with flocks and herds.

The resources of the country, too, while in the hands of a company

restricted in its trade, can be but partially called forth ; but in the hands of Americans, enjoying a direct trade with the East Indies, would be brought into quickening activity, and might soon realize the dream of Mr. Astor, in giving rise to a flourishing commercial empire.

WRECK OF A JAPANESE JUNK ON THE NORTHWEST COAST.

THE following extract of a letter which we received, lately, from Mr. Wyeth, may be interesting, as throwing some light upon the question as to the manner in which America has been peopled.

"Are you aware of the fact, that in the winter of 1833, a Japanese junk was wrecked on the northwest coast, in the neighborhood of Queen Charlotte's Island ; and that all but two of the crew, then much reduced by starvation and disease, during a long drift across the Pacific, were killed by the natives ? The two fell into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company and were sent to England. I saw them, on my arrival at Vancouver, in 1834."

INSTRUCTIONS TO CAPTAIN BONNEVILLE FROM THE MAJOR-GENERAL COMMANDING THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.

Head-quarters of the Army.
WASHINGTON, August 3, 1831.

SIR,—The leave of absence which you have asked, for the purpose of enabling you to carry into execution your design of exploring the country to the Rocky Mountains and beyond, with a view of ascertaining the nature and character of the several tribes of Indians inhabiting those regions ; the trade which might be profitably carried on with them ; the quality of the soil, the productions, the minerals, the natural history, the

climate, the geography and topography, as well as geology, of the various parts of the country within the limits of the territories belonging to the United States, between our frontier and the Pacific,—has been duly considered and submitted to the War Department for approval, and has been sanctioned. You are, therefore, authorized to be absent from the army until October, 1833. It is understood that the government is to be at no expense in reference to your proposed expedition, it having originated with yourself ; and all that you required was the permission from the proper authority to undertake the enterprise. You will, naturally, in preparing yourself for the expedition, provide suitable instruments, and especially the best maps of the interior to be found.

It is desirable, besides what is enumerated as the object of your enterprise, that you note particularly the number of warriors that may be in each tribe or nation that you may meet with ; their alliances with other tribes, and their relative position as to a state of peace or war, and whether their friendly or warlike dispositions towards each other are recent or of long standing. You will gratify us by describing their manner of making war ; of the mode of subsisting themselves during a state of war, and a state of peace ; their arms, and the effect of them ; whether they act on foot or on horseback ; detailing the discipline and maneuvers of the war parties ; the power of their horses, size, and general description ; in short, every information which you may conceive would be useful to the government.

You will avail yourself of every opportunity of informing us of your position and progress, and at the expiration of your leave of absence, will join your proper station.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obt. servant,

ALEXANDER MACOMB,

Major-General, commanding the Army.

Capt. B. L. E. BONNEVILLE,
7th Regt. of Infantry, New York.

TALES OF A TRAVELLER

BY

GEOFFREY CRAYON, GENT.

AUTHOR OF "THE SKETCH BOOK," "BRACEBRIDGE HALL,"
"KNICKERBOCKER'S NEW YORK," ETC.

I am neither your minotaure, nor your centaure, nor your satyr, nor your hyæna, nor your babion, but your meer traveller believe me.—BEN JONSON

THE AUTHOR'S REVISED EDITION

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME

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TO THE READER.

WORTHY AND DEAR READER!—Hast thou ever been waylaid in the midst of a pleasant tour by some treacherous malady: thy heels tripped up, and thou left to count the tedious minutes as they passed, in the solitude of an inn-chamber? If thou hast, thou wilt be able to pity me. Behold me, interrupted in the course of my journeying up the fair banks of the Rhine, and laid up by indisposition in this old frontier town of Mentz. I have worn out every source of amusement. I know the sound of every clock that strikes, and bell that rings, in the place. I know to a second when to listen for the first tap of the Prussian drum, as it summons the garrison to parade, or at what hour to expect the distant sound of the Austrian military band. All these have grown wearisome to me; and even the well-known step of my doctor, as he slowly paces the corridor, with healing in the creak of his shoes, no longer affords an agreeable interruption to the monotony of my apartment.

For a time I attempted to beguile the weary hours by studying German under the tuition of mine host's pretty little daughter, Katrine; but I soon found even German had not power to charm a languid ear, and that the con-

jugating of *ich liebe* might be powerless, however rosy the lips which uttered it.

I tried to read, but my mind would not fix itself. I turned over volume after volume, but threw them by with distaste: "Well, then," said I at length, in despair, "if I cannot read a book, I will write one." Never was there a more lucky idea; it at once gave me occupation and amusement. The writing of a book was considered in old times as an enterprise of toil and difficulty, insomuch that the most trifling lucubration was denominated a "work," and the world talked with awe and reverence of "the labors of the learned." These matters are better understood nowadays.

Thanks to the improvements in all kind of manufactures, the art of book-making has been made familiar to the meanest capacity. Everybody is an author. The scribbling of a quarto is the mere pastime of the idle; the young gentleman throws off his brace of duodecimos in the intervals of the sporting-season, and the young lady produces her set of volumes with the same facility that her great-grandmother worked a set of chair-bottoms.

The idea having struck me, therefore, to write a book, the reader will easily perceive that the execution of it was no difficult matter. I rummaged my portfolio, and cast about, in my recollection, for those floating materials which a man naturally collects in travelling; and here I have arranged them in this little work.

As I know this to be a story-telling and a story-reading age, and that the world is fond of being taught by apologue, I have digested the instruction I would convey into a number of tales. They may not possess the power of amusement which the tales told by many of my contemporaries possess; but then I value myself on the sound moral which each of them contains. This may not be apparent at first, but the reader will be sure to find it out in the end. I am for curing the world by gentle alteratives, not by violent doses; indeed, the patient should never be conscious that he is taking a dose. I have learnt this much from experience under the hands of the worthy Hippocrates of Mentz.

I am not, therefore, for those barefaced tales which carry their moral on the surface, staring one in the face; they are enough to deter the squeamish reader. On the contrary, I have often hid my moral from sight, and disguised it as much as possible by sweets and spices, so that while the simple reader is listening with open mouth to a ghost or a love story, he may have a bolus of sound morality popped down his throat, and be never the wiser for the fraud.

As the public is apt to be curious about the sources whence an author draws his stories, doubtless that it may know how far to put faith in them, I would observe, that the Adventure of the German Student, or rather the latter part of it, is founded on an anecdote related to me as existing somewhere in French; and, indeed, I have

been told, since writing it, that an ingenious tale has been founded on it by an English writer; but I have never met with either the former or the latter in print. Some of the circumstances in the Adventure of the Mysterious Picture, and in the Story of the Young Italian, are vague recollections of anecdotes related to me some years since; but from what source derived, I do not know. The Adventure of the Young Painter among the banditti is taken almost entirely from an authentic narrative in manuscript.

As to the other tales contained in this work, and indeed to my tales generally, I can make but one observation: I am an old traveller; I have read somewhat, heard and seen more, and dreamt more than all. My brain is filled, therefore, with all kinds of odds and ends. In travelling, these heterogeneous matters have become shaken up in my mind, as the articles are apt to be in an ill-packed travelling-trunk; so that when I attempt to draw forth a fact, I cannot determine whether I have read, heard, or dreamt it; and I am always at a loss to know how much to believe of my own stories.

These matters being premised, fall to, worthy reader, with good appetite; and, above all, with good-humor to what is here set before thee. If the tales I have furnished should prove to be bad, they will at least be found short; so that no one will be wearied long on the same theme. "Variety is charming," as some poet observes.

There is a certain relief in change, even though it be from bad to worse! As I have often found in travelling in a stage-coach, that it is often a comfort to shift one's position, and be bruised in a new place.

Ever thine,

GEOFFREY CRAYON.

Dated from the HOTEL DE DARMSTADT,
ci-devant HOTEL DE PARIS,
MENTZ, *otherwise called* MAYENCE.

PART FIRST.

STRANGE STORIES

BY

A NERVOUS GENTLEMAN.

I'll tell you more, there was a fish taken,
A monstrous fish, with a sword by 's side, a long sword,
A pike in 's neck, and a gun in 's nose, a huge gun,
And letters of mart in 's mouth from the Duke of Florence.

Cleanthes.—This is a monstrous lie.

Tony.— I do confess it.
Do you think I 'd tell you truths ?

FLETCHER'S *Wife for a Month.*

TALES OF A TRAVELLER.

THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

THE following adventures were related to me by the same nervous gentleman who told me the romantic tale of the Stout Gentleman, published in "Bracebridge Hall." It is very singular, that, although I expressly stated that story to have been told to me, and described the very person who told it, still it has been received as an adventure that happened to myself. Now I protest I never met with any adventure of the kind. I should not have grieved at this, had it not been intimated by the author of "Waverley," in an introduction to his novel of "Peveril of the Peak," that he was himself the stout gentleman alluded to. I have ever since been importuned by questions and letters from gentlemen, and particularly from ladies without number, touching what I had seen of the Great Unknown.

Now all this is extremely tantalizing. It is like being congratulated on the high prize when one has drawn a blank; for I have just as great a desire as any one of the

public to penetrate the mystery of that very singular personage, whose voice fills every corner of the world, without any one being able to tell whence it comes.

My friend, the nervous gentleman, also, who is a man of very shy, retired habits, complains that he has been excessively annoyed in consequence of its getting about in his neighborhood that he is the fortunate personage. Insomuch, that he has become a character of considerable notoriety in two or three country-towns, and has been repeatedly teased to exhibit himself at blue-stocking parties, for no other reason than that of being "the gentleman who has had a glimpse of the author of 'Waverley.'"

Indeed the poor man has grown ten times as nervous as ever since he has discovered, on such good authority, who the stout gentleman was; and will never forgive himself for not having made a more resolute effort to get a full sight of him. He has anxiously endeavored to call up a recollection of what he saw of that portly personage; and has ever since kept a curious eye on all gentlemen of more than ordinary dimensions, whom he has seen getting into stage-coaches. All in vain! The features he had caught a glimpse of seem common to the whole race of stout gentlemen, and the Great Unknown remains as great an unknown as ever.

Having premised these circumstances, I will now let the nervous gentleman proceed with his stories.

THE HUNTING-DINNER.

WAS once at a hunting-dinner, given by a worthy fox-hunting old Baronet, who kept bachelor's hall in jovial style in an ancient rook-haunted family-mansion, in one of the middle counties. He had been a devoted admirer of the fair sex in his younger days; but, having travelled much, studied the sex in various countries with distinguished success, and returned home profoundly instructed, as he supposed, in the ways of woman, and a perfect master of the art of pleasing, had the mortification of being jilted by a little boarding-school girl, who was scarcely versed in the accidence of love.

The Baronet was completely overcome by such an incredible defeat; retired from the world in disgust; put himself under the government of his housekeeper; and took to fox-hunting like a perfect Nimrod. Whatever poets may say to the contrary, a man will grow out of love as he grows old; and a pack of fox-hounds may chase out of his heart even the memory of a boarding-school goddess. The Baronet was, when I saw him, as merry and mellow an old bachelor as ever followed a

hound; and the love he had once felt for one woman had spread itself over the whole sex, so that there was not a pretty face in the whole country round but came in for a share.

The dinner was prolonged till a late hour; for our host having no ladies in his household to summon us to the drawing-room, the bottle maintained its true bachelor sway, unrivalled by its potent enemy, the tea-kettle. The old hall in which we dined echoed to bursts of robustious fox-hunting merriment, that made the ancient antlers shake on the walls. By degrees, however, the wine and the wassail of mine host began to operate upon bodies already a little jaded by the chase. The choice spirits which flashed up at the beginning of the dinner, sparkled for a time, then gradually went out one after another, or only emitted now and then a faint gleam from the socket. Some of the briskest talkers, who had given tongue so bravely at the first burst, fell fast asleep; and none kept on their way but certain of those long-winded prosers, who, like short-legged hounds, worry on unnoticed at the bottom of conversation, but are sure to be in at the death. Even these at length subsided into silence; and scarcely anything was heard but the nasal communications of two or three veteran masticators, who having been silent while awake, were indemnifying the company in their sleep.

At length the announcement of tea and coffee in the cedar-parlor roused all hands from this temporary tor-

por. Every one awoke marvellously renovated, and while sipping the refreshing beverage out of the Baronet's old-fashioned hereditary china, began to think of departing for their several homes. But here a sudden difficulty arose. While we had been prolonging our repast, a heavy winter storm had set in, with snow, rain, and sleet, driven by such bitter blasts of wind, that they threatened to penetrate to the very bone.

"It's all in vain," said our hospitable host, "to think of putting one's head out of doors in such weather. So, gentlemen, I hold you my guests for this night at least, and will have your quarters prepared accordingly."

The unruly weather, which became more and more tempestuous, rendered the hospitable suggestion unanswerable. The only question was, whether such an unexpected accession of company to an already crowded house would not put the housekeeper to her trumps to accommodate them.

"Pshaw," cried mine host; "did you ever know a bachelor's hall that was not elastic, and able to accommodate twice as many as it could hold?" So, out of a good-humored pique, the housekeeper was summoned to a consultation before us all. The old lady appeared in her gala suit of faded brocade, which rustled with flurry and agitation; for, in spite of our host's bravado, she was a little perplexed. But in a bachelor's house, and with bachelor guests, these matters are readily managed. There is no lady of the house to stand upon squeamish

points about lodging gentlemen in odd holes and corners, and exposing the shabby parts of the establishment. A bachelor's housekeeper is used to shifts and emergencies; so, after much worrying to and fro, and divers consultations about the red-room, and the blue-room, and the chintz-room, and the damask-room, and the little room with the bow-window, the matter was finally arranged.

When all this was done, we were once more summoned to the standing rural amusement of eating. The time that had been consumed in dozing after dinner, and in the refreshment and consultation of the cedar-parlor, was sufficient, in the opinion of the rosy-faced butler, to engender a reasonable appetite for supper. A slight repast had, therefore, been tricked up from the residue of dinner, consisting of a cold sirloin of beef, hashed venison, a devilled leg of a turkey or so, and a few other of those light articles taken by country gentlemen to ensure sound sleep and heavy snoring.

The nap after dinner had brightened up every one's wit; and a great deal of excellent humor was expended upon the perplexities of mine host and his housekeeper, by certain married gentlemen of the company, who considered themselves privileged in joking with a bachelor's establishment. From this the banter turned as to what quarters each would find, on being thus suddenly billeted in so antiquated a mansion.

"By my soul," said an Irish captain of dragoons, one of the most merry and boisterous of the party, "by my soul,

but I should not be surprised if some of those good-looking gentlefolks that hang along the walls should walk about the rooms of this stormy night; or if I should find the ghosts of one of those long-waisted ladies turning into my bed in mistake for her grave in the churchyard."

"Do you believe in ghosts, then?" said a thin, hatchet-faced gentleman, with projecting eyes like a lobster.

I had remarked this last personage during dinner-time for one of those incessant questioners, who have a craving, unhealthy appetite in conversation. He never seemed satisfied with the whole of a story; never laughed when others laughed; but always put the joke to the question. He never could enjoy the kernel of the nut, but pestered himself to get more out of the shell. "Do you believe in ghosts, then?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"Faith, but I do," replied the jovial Irishman. "I was brought up in the fear and belief of them. We had a Benshee in our own family, honey."

"A Benshee, and what's that?" cried the questioner.

"Why, an old lady ghost that tends upon your real Milesian families, and waits at their window to let them know when some of them are to die."

"A mighty pleasant piece of information!" cried an elderly gentleman with a knowing look, and with a flexible nose, to which he could give a whimsical twist when he wished to be waggish.

"By my soul, but I'd have you to know it's a piece of

distinction to be waited on by a Benshee. It's a proof that one has pure blood in one's veins. But i' faith, now we are talking of ghosts, there never was a house or a night better fitted than the present for a ghost adventure. Pray, Sir John, haven't you such a thing as a haunted chamber to put a guest in?"

"Perhaps," said the Baronet, smiling, "I might accommodate you even on that point."

"Oh, I should like it of all things, my jewel. Some dark oaken room, with ugly woe-begone portraits, that stare dismally at one; and about which the housekeeper has a power of delightful stories of love and murder. And then a dim lamp, a table with a rusty sword across it, and a spectre all in white, to draw aside one's curtains at midnight"—

"In truth," said an old gentleman at one end of the table, "you put me in mind of an anecdote"—

"Oh, a ghost-story! a ghost-story!" was vociferated round the board, every one edging his chair a little nearer.

The attention of the whole company was now turned upon the speaker. He was an old gentleman, one side of whose face was no match for the other. The eye-lid drooped and hung down like an unhinged window-shutter. Indeed, the whole side of his head was dilapidated, and seemed like the wing of a house shut up and haunted. I'll warrant that side was well stuffed with ghost-stories.

There was a universal demand for the tale.

"Nay," said the old gentleman, "it's a mere anecdote, and a very commonplace one; but such as it is you shall have it. It is a story that I once heard my uncle tell as having happened to himself. He was a man very apt to meet with strange adventures. I have heard him tell of others much more singular."

"What kind of a man was your uncle?" said the questioning gentleman.

"Why, he was rather a dry, shrewd kind of body; a great traveller, and fond of telling his adventures."

"Pray, how old might he have been when that happened?"

"When what happened?" cried the gentleman with the flexible nose, impatiently. "Egad, you have not given anything a chance to happen. Come, never mind our uncle's age; let us have his adventures."

The inquisitive gentleman being for the moment silenced, the old gentleman with the haunted head proceeded.

THE ADVENTURE OF MY UNCLE.

MANY years since, some time before the French Revolution, my uncle passed several months at Paris. The English and French were on better terms in those days than at present, and mingled cordially in society. The English went abroad to spend money then, and the French were always ready to help them: they go abroad to save money at present, and that they can do without French assistance. Perhaps the travelling English were fewer and choicer than at present, when the whole nation has broke loose and inundated the continent. At any rate, they circulated more readily and currently in foreign society, and my uncle, during his residence in Paris, made many very intimate acquaintances among the French noblesse.

Some time afterwards, he was making a journey in the winter-time in that part of Normandy called the Pays de Caux, when, as evening was closing in, he perceived the turrets of an ancient chateau rising out of the trees of its walled park; each turret with its high conical roof of gray slate, like a candle with an extinguisher on it.

"To whom does that chateau belong, friend?" cried my uncle to a meagre but fiery postilion, who, with tre-

mendous jack-boots and cocked hat, was floundering on before him.

"To Monseigneur the Marquis de ——," said the postilion, touching his hat, partly out of respect to my uncle, and partly out of reverence to the noble name pronounced.

My uncle recollected the Marquis for a particular friend in Paris, who had often expressed a wish to see him at his paternal chateau. My uncle was an old traveller, one who knew well how to turn things to account. He revolved for a few moments in his mind, how agreeable it would be to his friend the Marquis to be surprised in this sociable way by a pop visit; and how much more agreeable to himself to get into snug quarters in a chateau, and have a relish of the Marquis's well-known kitchen, and a smack of his superior Champagne and Burgundy, rather than put up with the miserable lodgment and miserable fare of a provincial inn. In a few minutes, therefore, the meagre postilion was cracking his whip like a very devil, or like a true Frenchman, up the long, straight avenue that led to the chateau.

You have no doubt all seen French chateaus, as everybody travels in France nowadays. This was one of the oldest; standing naked and alone in the midst of a desert of gravel walks and cold stone terraces; with a cold-looking, formal garden, cut into angles and rhomboids; and a cold, leafless park, divided geometrically by straight alleys; and two or three cold-looking noseless

statues; and fountains spouting cold water enough to make one's teeth chatter. At least such was the feeling they imparted on the wintry day of my uncle's visit; though, in hot summer weather, I'll warrant there was glare enough to scorch one's eyes out.

The smacking of the postilion's whip, which grew more and more intense the nearer they approached, frightened a flight of pigeons out of a dove-cot, and rooks out of the roofs, and finally a crew of servants out of the chateau, with the Marquis at their head. He was enchanted to see my uncle, for his chateau, like the house of our worthy host, had not many more guests at the time than it could accommodate. So he kissed my uncle on each cheek, after the French fashion, and ushered him into the castle.

The Marquis did the honors of the house with the urbanity of his country. In fact, he was proud of his old family chateau, for part of it was extremely old. There was a tower and chapel which had been built almost before the memory of man; but the rest was more modern, the castle having been nearly demolished during the wars of the league. The Marquis dwelt upon this event with great satisfaction, and seemed really to entertain a grateful feeling towards Henry the Fourth, for having thought his paternal mansion worth battering down. He had many stories to tell of the prowess of his ancestors; and several skull-caps, helmets, and cross-bows, and divers huge boots and buff jerkins, to show, which had been

worn by the leaguers. Above all, there was a two-handed sword, which he could hardly wield, but which he displayed, as a proof that there had been giants in his family.

In truth, he was but a small descendant from such great warriors. When you looked at their bluff visages and brawny limbs, as depicted in their portraits, and then at the little Marquis, with his spindle shanks, and his sallow lantern visage, flanked with a pair of powdered ear-locks, or *aîles de pigeon*, that seemed ready to fly away with it, you could hardly believe him to be of the same race. But when you looked at the eyes that sparkled out like a beetle's from each side of his hooked nose, you saw at once that he inherited all the fiery spirit of his forefathers. In fact, a Frenchman's spirit never exhales, however his body may dwindle. It rather rarefies, and grows more inflammable, as the earthly particles diminish; and I have seen valor enough in a little fiery-hearted French dwarf to have furnished out a tolerable giant.

When once the Marquis, as was his wont, put on one of the old helmets stuck up in his hall, though his head no more filled it than a dry pea its peascod, yet his eyes flashed from the bottom of the iron cavern with the brilliancy of carbuncles; and when he poised the ponderous two-handed sword of his ancestors, you would have thought you saw the doughty little David wielding the sword of Goliath, which was unto him like a weaver's beam.

However, gentlemen, I am dwelling too long on this description of the Marquis and his chateau, but you must excuse me; he was an old friend of my uncle; and whenever my uncle told the story, he was always fond of talking a great deal about his host.—Poor little Marquis! He was one of that handful of gallant courtiers who made such a devoted but hopeless stand in the cause of their sovereign, in the chateau of the Tuileries, against the irruption of the mob on the sad tenth of August. He displayed the valor of a preux French chevalier to the last; flourishing feebly his little court-sword with a *ça-ça!* in face of a whole legion of *sans-culottes;* but was pinned to the wall like a butterfly, by the pike of a *poissarde,* and his heroic soul was borne up to heaven on his *aîles de pigeon.*

But all this has nothing to do with my story. To the point, then. When the hour arrived for retiring for the night, my uncle was shown to his room in a venerable old tower. It was the oldest part of the chateau, and had in ancient times been the donjon or strong-hold; of course the chamber was none of the best. The Marquis had put him there, however, because he knew him to be a traveller of taste, and fond of antiquities; and also because the better apartments were already occupied. Indeed, he perfectly reconciled my uncle to his quarters by mentioning the great personages who had once inhabited them, all of whom were, in some way or other, connected with the family. If you would take his word for it, John

Baliol, or as he called him, Jean de Bailleul, had died of chagrin in this very chamber, on hearing of the success of his rival, Robert de Bruce, at the battle of Bannockburn. And when he added that the Duke de Guise had slept in it, my uncle was fain to felicitate himself on being honored with such distinguished quarters.

The night was shrewd and windy, and the chamber none of the warmest. An old, long-faced, long-bodied servant, in quaint livery, who attended upon my uncle, threw down an armful of wood beside the fireplace, gave a queer look about the room, and then wished him *bon repos* with a grimace and a shrug that would have been suspicious from any other than an old French servant.

The chamber had indeed a wild, crazy look, enough to strike any one who had read romances with apprehension and foreboding. The windows were high and narrow, and had once been loop-holes, but had been rudely enlarged, as well as the extreme thickness of the walls would permit; and the ill-fitted casements rattled to every breeze. You would have thought, on a windy night, some of the old leaguers were tramping and clanking about the apartment in their huge boots and rattling spurs. A door which stood ajar, and, like a true French door, would stand ajar in spite of every reason and effort to the contrary, opened upon a long dark corridor, that led the Lord knows whither, and seemed just made for ghosts to air themselves in, when they turned out of their graves at midnight. The wind would spring up into a

hoarse murmur through this passage, and creak the door to and fro, as if some dubious ghost were balancing in its mind whether to come in or not. In a word, it was precisely the kind of comfortless apartment that a ghost, if ghost there were in the chateau, would single out for its favorite lounge.

My uncle, however, though a man accustomed to meet with strange adventures, apprehended none at the time. He made several attempts to shut the door, but in vain. Not that he apprehended anything, for he was too old a traveller to be daunted by a wild-looking apartment; but the night, as I have said, was cold and gusty, and the wind howled about the old turret pretty much as it does round this old mansion at this moment, and the breeze from the long dark corridor came in as damp and as chilly as if from a dungeon. My uncle, therefore, since he could not close the door, threw a quantity of wood on the fire, which soon sent up a flame in the great wide-mouthed chimney that illumined the whole chamber; and made the shadow of the tongs on the opposite wall look like a long-legged giant. My uncle now clambered on the top of the half-score of mattresses which form a French bed, and which stood in a deep recess; then tucking himself snugly in, and burying himself up to the chin in the bedclothes, he lay looking at the fire, and listening to the wind, and thinking how knowingly he had come over his friend the Marquis for a night's lodging—and so he fell asleep.

He had not taken above half of his first nap when he was awakened by the clock of the chateau, in the turret over his chamber, which struck midnight. It was just such an old clock as ghosts are fond of. It had a deep, dismal tone, and struck so slowly and tediously that my uncle thought it would never have done. He counted and counted till he was confident he counted thirteen, and then it stopped.

The fire had burnt low, and the blaze of the last fagot was almost expiring, burning in small blue flames, which now and then lengthened up into little white gleams. My uncle lay with his eyes half closed, and his nightcap drawn almost down to his nose. His fancy was already wandering, and began to mingle up the present scene with the crater of Vesuvius, the French Opera, the Coliseum at Rome, Dolly's chop-house in London, and all the farrago of noted places with which the brain of a traveller is crammed,—in a word, he was just falling asleep.

Suddenly he was roused by the sound of footsteps, slowly pacing along the corridor. My uncle, as I have often heard him say himself, was a man not easily frightened. So he lay quiet, supposing this some other guest, or some servant on his way to bed. The footsteps, however, approached the door; the door gently opened; whether of its own accord, or whether pushed open, my uncle could not distinguish: a figure all in white glided in. It was a female, tall and stately, and of a command-

ing air. Her dress was of an ancient fashion, ample in volume, and sweeping the floor. She walked up to the fireplace, without regarding my uncle, who raised his nightcap with one hand, and stared earnestly at her. She remained for some time standing by the fire, which, flashing up at intervals, cast blue and white gleams of light, that enabled my uncle to remark her appearance minutely.

Her face was ghastly pale, and perhaps rendered still more so by the bluish light of the fire. It possessed beauty, but its beauty was saddened by care and anxiety. There was the look of one accustomed to trouble, but of one whom trouble could not cast down nor subdue; for there was still the predominating air of proud, unconquerable resolution. Such at least was the opinion formed by my uncle, and he considered himself a great physiognomist.

The figure remained, as I said, for some time by the fire, putting out first one hand, then the other; then each foot alternately, as if warming itself; for your ghosts, if ghost it really was, are apt to be cold. My uncle, furthermore, remarked that it wore high-heeled shoes, after an ancient fashion, with paste or diamond buckles, that sparkled as though they were alive. At length the figure turned gently round, casting a glassy look about the apartment, which, as it passed over my uncle, made his blood run cold, and chilled the very marrow in his bones. It then stretched its arms towards

heaven, clasped its hands, and wringing them in a supplicating manner, glided slowly out of the room.

My uncle lay for some time meditating on this visitation, for (as he remarked when he told me the story) though a man of firmness, he was also a man of reflection, and did not reject a thing because it was out of the regular course of events. However, being as I have before said, a great traveller, and accustomed to strange adventures, he drew his nightcap resolutely over his eyes, turned his back to the door, hoisted the bedclothes high over his shoulders, and gradually fell asleep.

How long he slept he could not say, when he was awakened by the voice of some one at his bedside. He turned round, and beheld the old French servant, with his ear-locks in tight buckles on each side of a long lantern face, on which habit had deeply wrinkled an everlasting smile. He made a thousand grimaces, and asked a thousand pardons for disturbing Monsieur, but the morning was considerably advanced. While my uncle was dressing, he called vaguely to mind the visitor of the preceding night. He asked the ancient domestic what lady was in the habit of rambling about this part of the chateau at night. The old valet shrugged his shoulders as high as his head, laid one hand on his bosom, threw open the other with every finger extended, made a most whimsical grimace which he meant to be complimentary, and replied, that it was not for him to know anything of *les bonnes fortunes* of Monsieur.

My uncle saw there was nothing satisfactory to be learned in this quarter. After breakfast, he was walking with the Marquis through the modern apartments of the chateau, sliding over the well-waxed floors of silken saloons, amidst furniture rich in gilding and brocade, until they came to a long picture-gallery, containing many portraits, some in oil and some in chalks.

Here was an ample field for the eloquence of his host, who had all the pride of a nobleman of the *ancien régime.* There was not a grand name in Normandy, and hardly one in France, which was not, in some way or other, connected with his house. My uncle stood listening with inward impatience, resting sometimes on one leg, sometimes on the other, as the little Marquis descanted, with his usual fire and vivacity, on the achievements of his ancestors, whose portraits hung along the wall; from the martial deeds of the stern warriors in steel, to the gallantries and intrigues of the blue-eyed gentlemen, with fair smiling faces, powdered ear-locks, laced ruffles, and pink and blue silk coats and breeches;—not forgetting the conquests of the lovely shepherdesses, with hooped petticoats, and waists no thicker than an hour-glass, who appeared ruling over their sheep and their swains, with dainty crooks decorated with fluttering ribbons.

In the midst of his friend's discourse, my uncle was startled on beholding a full-length portrait, the very counterpart of his visitor of the preceding night.

"Methinks," said he, pointing to it, "I have seen the original of this portrait."

"Pardonnez moi," replied the Marquis politely, "that can hardly be, as the lady has been dead more than a hundred years. That was the beautiful Duchess de Longueville, who figured during the minority of Louis the Fourteenth."

"And was there anything remarkable in her history?"

Never was question more unlucky. The little Marquis immediately threw himself into the attitude of a man about to tell a long story. In fact, my uncle had pulled upon himself the whole history of the civil war of the Fronde, in which the beautiful Duchess had played so distinguished a part. Turenne, Coligni, Mazarin, were called up from their graves to grace his narration; nor were the affairs of the barricaders, nor the chivalry of the portes-cochères forgotten. My uncle began to wish himself a thousand leagues off from the Marquis and his merciless memory, when suddenly the little man's recollections took a more interesting turn. He was relating the imprisonment of the Duke de Longueville with the Princes Condé and Conti in the chateau of Vincennes, and the ineffectual efforts of the Duchess to rouse the sturdy Normans to their rescue. He had come to that part where she was invested by the royal forces in the Castle of Dieppe.

"The spirit of the Duchess," proceeded the Marquis, "rose from her trials. It was astonishing to see so deli-

cate and beautiful a thing buffet so resolutely with hardships. She determined on a desperate means of escape. You may have seen the chateau in which she was mewed up,—an old ragged wart of an edifice, standing on the knuckle of a hill, just above the rusty little town of Dieppe. One dark unruly night she issued secretly out of a small postern gate of the castle, which the enemy had neglected to guard. The postern gate is there to this very day; opening upon a narrow bridge over a deep fosse between the castle and the brow of the hill. She was followed by her female attendants, a few domestics, and some gallant cavaliers, who still remained faithful to her fortunes. Her object was to gain a small port about two leagues distant, where she had privately provided a vessel for her escape in case of emergency.

"The little band of fugitives were obliged to perform the distance on foot. When they arrived at the port the wind was high and stormy, the tide contrary, the vessel anchored far off in the road, and no means of getting on board but by a fishing-shallop which lay tossing like a cockle-shell on the edge of the surf. The Duchess determined to risk the attempt. The seamen endeavored to dissuade her, but the imminence of her danger on shore, and the magnanimity of her spirit, urged her on. She had to be borne to the shallop in the arms of a mariner. Such was the violence of the wind and waves that he faltered, lost his foothold, and let his precious burden fall into the sea.

"The Duchess was nearly drowned, but partly through her own struggles, partly by the exertions of the seamen, she got to land. As soon as she had a little recovered strength, she insisted on renewing the attempt. The storm, however, had by this time become so violent as to set all efforts at defiance. To delay, was to be discovered and taken prisoner. As the only resource left, she procured horses, mounted with her female attendants, *en croupe,* behind the gallant gentlemen who accompanied her, and scoured the country to seek some temporary asylum.

"While the Duchess," continued the Marquis, laying his forefinger on my uncle's breast to arouse his flagging attention,—"while the Duchess, poor lady, was wandering amid the tempest in this disconsolate manner, she arrived at this chateau. Her approach caused some uneasiness; for the clattering of a troop of horse at dead of night up the avenue of a lonely chateau, in those unsettled times, and in a troubled part of the country, was enough to occasion alarm.

"A tall, broad-shouldered chasseur, armed to the teeth, galloped ahead and announced the name of the visitor. All uneasiness was dispelled. The household turned out with flambeaux to receive her, and never did torches gleam on a more weather-beaten, travel-stained band than came tramping into the court. Such pale, careworn faces, such bedraggled dresses, as the poor Duchess and her females presented, each seated behind her cavalier: while the half-drenched, half-drowsy pages and attend-

ants seemed ready to fall from their horses with sleep and fatigue.

"The Duchess was received with a hearty welcome by my ancestor. She was ushered into the hall of the chateau, and the fires soon crackled and blazed, to cheer herself and her train; and every spit and stew-pan was put in requisition to prepare ample refreshment for the wayfarers.

"She had a right to our hospitalities," continued the Marquis, drawing himself up with a slight degree of stateliness, "for she was related to our family. I'll tell you how it was. Her father, Henry de Bourbon, Prince of Condé"——

"But did the Duchess pass the night in the chateau?" said my uncle rather abruptly, terrified at the idea of getting involved in one of the Marquis's genealogical discussions.

"Oh, as to the Duchess, she was put into the very apartment you occupied last night, which at that time was a kind of state-apartment. Her followers were quartered in the chambers opening upon the neighboring corridor, and her favorite page slept in an adjoining closet. Up and down the corridor walked the great chasseur who had announced her arrival, and who acted as a kind of sentinel or guard. He was a dark, stern, powerful-looking fellow; and as the light of a lamp in the corridor fell upon his deeply marked face and sinewy form, he seemed capable of defending the castle with his single arm.

"It was a rough, rude night; about this time of the year—apropos!—now I think of it, last night was the anniversary of her visit. I may well remember the precise date, for it was a night not to be forgotten by our house. There is a singular tradition concerning it in our family." Here the Marquis hesitated, and a cloud seemed to gather about his bushy eyebrows. "There is a tradition—that a strange occurrence took place that night.—A strange, mysterious, inexplicable occurrence."—Here he checked himself, and paused.

"Did it relate to that lady?" inquired my uncle, eagerly.

"It was past the hour of midnight," resumed the Marquis,—"when the whole chateau"—— Here he paused again. My uncle made a movement of anxious curiosity.

"Excuse me," said the Marquis, a slight blush streaking his sallow visage. "There are some circumstances connected with our family history which I do not like to relate. That was a rude period. A time of great crimes among great men: for you know high blood, when it runs wrong, will not run tamely, like blood of the *canaille* —poor lady!—But I have a little family pride, that—excuse me—we will change the subject if you please"—

My uncle's curiosity was piqued. The pompous and magnificent introduction had led him to expect something wonderful in the story to which it served as a kind of avenue. He had no idea of being cheated out of it by a sudden fit of unreasonable squeamishness. Besides,

being a traveller in quest of information, he considered it his duty to inquire into everything.

The Marquis, however, evaded every question.

"Well," said my uncle a little petulantly, "whatever you may think of it, I saw that lady last night."

The Marquis stepped back and gazed at him with surprise.

"She paid me a visit in my bedchamber."

The Marquis pulled out his snuff-box with a shrug and a smile; taking this no doubt for an awkward piece of English pleasantry, which politeness required him to be charmed with.

My uncle went on gravely, however, and related the whole circumstance. The Marquis heard him through with profound attention, holding his snuff-box unopened in his hand. When the story was finished, he tapped on the lid of his box deliberately, took a long, sonorous pinch of snuff——

"Bah!" said the Marquis, and walked towards the other end of the gallery.——

Here the narrator paused. The company waited for some time for him to resume his narration; but he continued silent.

"Well," said the inquisitive gentleman,—"and what did your uncle say then?"

"Nothing," replied the other.

"And what did the Marquis say farther?"

"Nothing."

"And is that all?"

"That is all," said the narrator, filling a glass of wine.

"I surmise," said the shrewd old gentleman with the waggish nose,—"I surmise the ghost must have been the old housekeeper, walking her rounds to see that all was right."

"Bah!" said the narrator. "My uncle was too much accustomed to strange sights not to know a ghost from a housekeeper."

There was a murmur round the table, half of merriment, half of disappointment. I was inclined to think the old gentleman had really an after-part of his story in reserve; but he sipped his wine and said nothing more; and there was an odd expression about his dilapidated countenance which left me in doubt whether he were in drollery or earnest.

"Egad," said the knowing gentleman, with the flexible nose, "this story of your uncle puts me in mind of one that used to be told of an aunt of mine, by the mother's side; though I don't know that it will bear a comparison, as the good lady was not so prone to meet with strange adventures. But any rate you shall have it."

THE ADVENTURE OF MY AUNT.

MY aunt was a lady of large frame, strong mind, and great resolution: she was what might be termed a very manly woman. My uncle was a thin, puny little man, very meek and acquiescent, and no match for my aunt. It was observed that he dwindled and dwindled gradually away, from the day of his marriage. His wife's powerful mind was too much for him; it wore him out. My aunt, however, took all possible care of him; had half the doctors in town to prescribe for him; made him take all their prescriptions, and dosed him with physic enough to cure a whole hospital. All was in vain. My uncle grew worse and worse the more dosing and nursing he underwent, until in the end he added another to the long list of matrimonial victims who have been killed with kindness.

"And was it his ghost that appeared to her?" asked the inquisitive gentleman, who had questioned the former story-teller.

"You shall hear," replied the narrator.—My aunt took on mightily for the death of her poor dear husband. Perhaps she felt some compunction at having given him so much physic, and nursed him into the grave. At any

rate, she did all that a widow could do to honor his memory. She spared no expense in either the quantity or quality of her mourning weeds; wore a miniature of him about her neck as large as a little sun-dial, and had a full-length portrait of him always hanging in her bedchamber. All the world extolled her conduct to the skies; and it was determined that a woman who behaved so well to the memory of one husband deserved soon to get another.

It was not long after this that she went to take up her residence in an old country-seat in Derbyshire, which had long been in the care of merely a steward and housekeeper. She took most of her servants with her, intending to make it her principal abode. The house stood in a lonely wild part of the country, among the gray Derbyshire hills, with a murderer hanging in chains on a bleak height in full view.

The servants from town were half frightened out of their wits at the idea of living in such a dismal, pagan-looking place; especially when they got together in the servants' hall in the evening, and compared notes on all the hobgoblin stories picked up in the course of the day. They were afraid to venture alone about the gloomy, black-looking chambers. My lady's maid, who was troubled with nerves, declared she could never sleep alone in such a "gashly rummaging old building"; and the footman, who was a kind-hearted young fellow, did all in his power to cheer her up.

My aunt was struck with the lonely appearance of the house. Before going to bed, therefore, she examined well the fastnesses of the doors and windows; locked up the plate with her own hands, and carried the keys, together with a little box of money and jewels, to her own room; for she was a notable woman, and always saw to all things herself. Having put the keys under her pillow, and dismissed her maid, she sat by her toilet, arranging her hair; for being, in spite of her grief for my uncle, rather a buxom widow, she was somewhat particular about her person. She sat for a little while looking at her face in the glass, first on one side, then on the other, as ladies are apt to do when they would ascertain whether they have been in good looks; for a roistering country squire of the neighborhood, with whom she had flirted when a girl, had called that day to welcome her to the country.

All of a sudden she thought she heard something move behind her. She looked hastily round, but there was nothing to be seen. Nothing but the grimly painted portrait of her poor dear man, hanging against the wall.

She gave a heavy sigh to his memory, as she was accustomed to do whenever she spoke of him in company, and then went on adjusting her night-dress, and thinking of the squire. Her sigh was reëchoed, or answered, by a long-drawn breath. She looked round again, but no one was to be seen. She ascribed these sounds to the wind oozing through the rat-holes of the old mansion, and pro-

ceeded leisurely to put her hair in papers, when, all at once, she thought she perceived one of the eyes of the portrait move.

"The back of her head being towards it!" said the story-teller with the ruined head,—"good!"

"Yes, sir!" replied dryly the narrator, "her back being towards the portrait, but her eyes fixed on its reflection in the glass."—Well, as I was saying, she perceived one of the eyes of the portrait move. So strange a circumstance, as you may well suppose, gave her a sudden shock. To assure herself of the fact, she put one hand to her forehead as if rubbing it; peeped through her fingers, and moved the candle with the other hand. The light of the taper gleamed on the eye, and was reflected from it. She was sure it moved. Nay, more, it seemed to give her a wink, as she had sometimes known her husband to do when living! It struck a momentary chill to her heart; for she was a lone woman, and felt herself fearfully situated.

The chill was but transient. My aunt, who was almost as resolute a personage as your uncle, sir, (turning to the old story-teller,) became instantly calm and collected. She went on adjusting her dress. She even hummed an air, and did not make even a single false note. She casually overturned a dressing-box; took a candle and picked up the articles one by one from the floor; pursued a rolling pin-cushion that was making the best of its way under the bed; then opened the door; looked for

an instant into the corrider, as if in doubt whether to go; and then walked quietly out.

She hastened down-stairs, ordered the servants to arm themselves with the weapons first at hand, placed herself at their head, and returned almost immediately.

Her hastily levied army presented a formidable force. The steward had a rusty blunderbuss, the coachman a loaded whip, the footman a pair of horse-pistols, the cook a huge chopping-knife, and the butler a bottle in each hand. My aunt led the van with a red-hot poker, and in my opinion she was the most formidable of the party. The waiting-maid, who dreaded to stay alone in the servants' hall, brought up the rear, smelling to a broken bottle of volatile salts, and expressing her terror of the ghostesses. "Ghosts!" said my aunt, resolutely. "I'll singe their whiskers for them!"

They entered the chamber. All was still and undisturbed as when she had left it. They approached the portrait of my uncle.

"Pull down that picture!" cried my aunt. A heavy groan, and a sound like the chattering of teeth, issued from the portrait. The servants shrunk back; the maid uttered a faint shriek, and clung to the footman for support.

"Instantly!" added my aunt, with a stamp of the foot.

The picture was pulled down, and from a recess behind it, in which had formerly stood a clock, they hauled forth a round-shouldered, black-bearded varlet, with a knife

as long as my arm, but trembling all over like an aspen-leaf.

"Well, and who was he? No ghost, I suppose," said the inquisitive gentleman.

"A Knight of the Post," replied the narrator, "who had been smitten with the worth of the wealthy widow; or rather a marauding Tarquin, who had stolen into her chamber to violate her purse, and rifle her strong box, when all the house should be asleep. In plain terms," continued he, "the vagabond was a loose idle fellow of the neighborhood, who had once been a servant in the hours, and had been employed to assist in arranging it for the reception of its mistress. He confessed that he had contrived this hiding-place for his nefarious purpose, and had borrowed an eye from the portrait by way of a reconnoitring-hole."

"And what did they do with him?—did they hang him?" resumed the questioner.

"Hang him!—how could they?" exclaimed a beetle-browed barrister, with a hawk's nose. "The offence was not capital. No robbery, no assault had been committed. No forcible entry or breaking into the premises"—

"My aunt," said the narrator, "was a woman of spirit, and apt to take the law in her own hands. She had her own notions of cleanliness also. She ordered the fellow to be drawn through the horse-pond, to cleanse away all offences, and then to be well rubbed down with an oaken towel."

"And what became of him afterwards?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"I do not exactly know. I believe he was sent on a voyage of improvement to Botany Bay."

"And your aunt," said the inquisitive gentleman; "I'll warrant she took care to make her maid sleep in the room with her after that."

"No, sir, she did better; she gave her hand shortly after to the roistering squire; for she used to observe, that it was a dismal thing for a woman to sleep alone in the country."

"She was right," observed the inquisitive gentleman, nodding sagaciously; "but I am sorry they did not hang that fellow."

It was agreed on all hands that the last narrator had brought his tale to the most satisfactory conclusion, though a country clergyman present regretted that the uncle and aunt, who figured in the different stories, had not been married together; they certainly would have been well matched.

"But I don't see, after all," said the inquisitive gentleman, "that there was any ghost in this last story."

"Oh! If it's ghosts you want, honey," cried the Irish Captain of Dragoons, "if it's ghosts you want, you shall have a whole regiment of them. And since these gentlemen have given the adventures of their uncles and aunts, faith, and I'll even give you a chapter out of my own family-history."

THE BOLD DRAGOON;

OR,

THE ADVENTURE OF MY GRANDFATHER.

MY grandfather was a bold dragoon, for it's a profession, d'ye see, that has run in the family. All my forefathers have been dragoons, and died on the field of honor, except myself, and I hope my posterity may be able to say the same; however, I don't mean to be vainglorious. Well, my grandfather, as I said, was a bold dragoon, and had served in the Low Countries. In fact, he was one of that very army, which, according to my uncle Toby, swore so terribly in Flanders. He could swear a good stick himself; and moreover was the very man that introduced the doctrine Corporal Trim mentions of radical heat and radical moisture, or, in other words, the mode of keeping out the damps of ditch-water by burnt brandy. Be that as it may, it's nothing to the purport of my story. I only tell it to show you that my grandfather was a man not easily to be humbugged. He had seen service, or, according to his own phrase, he had seen the devil—and that's saying everything.

Well, gentlemen, my grandfather was on his way to

England, for which he intended to embark from Ostend—bad luck to the place! for one where I was kept by storms and head-winds for three long days, and the devil of a jolly companion or pretty girl to comfort me. Well, as I was saying, my grandfather was on his way to England, or rather to Ostend—no matter which, it's all the same. So one evening, towards nightfall, he rode jollily into Bruges.—Very like you all know Bruges, gentlemen; a queer, old-fashioned Flemish town, once, they say, a great place for trade and money-making in old times, when the Mynheers were in their glory; but almost as large and as empty as an Irishman's pocket at the present day.—Well, gentlemen, it was at the time of the annual fair. All Bruges was crowded; and the canals swarmed with Dutch boats, and the streets swarmed with Dutch merchants; and there was hardly any getting along for goods, wares, and merchandises, and peasants in big breeches, and women in half a score of petticoats.

My grandfather rode jollily along, in his easy, slashing way, for he was a saucy, sunshiny fellow—staring about him at the motley crowd, and the old houses with gable ends to the street, and storks' nests in the chimneys; winking at the juffrouws who showed their faces at the windows, and joking the women right and left in the street; all of whom laughed, and took it in amazing good part; for though he did not know a word of the language, yet he had always a knack of making himself understood among the women.

Well, gentlemen, it being the time of the annual fair, all the town was crowded, every inn and tavern full, and my grandfather applied in vain from one to the other for admittance. At length he rode up to an old rickety inn, that looked ready to fall to pieces, and which all the rats would have run away from, if they could have found room in any other house to put their heads. It was just such a queer building as you see in Dutch pictures, with a tall roof that reached up into the clouds, and as many garrets, one over the other, as the seven heavens of Mahomet. Nothing had saved it from tumbling down but a stork's nest on the chimney, which always brings good luck to a house in the Low Countries; and at the very time of my grandfather's arrival, there were two of these long-legged birds of grace standing like ghosts on the chimney-top. Faith, but they've kept the house on its legs to this very day, for you may see it any time you pass through Bruges, as it stands there yet, only it is turned into a brewery of strong Flemish beer,—at least it was so when I came that way after the battle of Waterloo.

My grandfather eyed the house curiously as he approached. It might not have altogether struck his fancy, had he not seen in large letters over the door,

HIER VERKOOPT MAN GOEDEN DRANK.

My grandfather had learnt enough of the language to

know that the sign promised good liquor. "This is the house for me," said he, stopping short before the door.

The sudden appearance of a dashing dragoon was an event in an old inn frequented only by the peaceful sons of traffic. A rich burgher of Antwerp, a stately ample man in a broad Flemish hat, and who was the great man and great patron of the establishment, sat smoking a clean long pipe on one side of the door; a fat little distiller of Geneva, from Schiedam, sat smoking on the other; and the bottle-nosed host stood in the door, and the comely hostess, in crimped cap, beside him; and the hostess's daughter, a plump Flanders lass, with long gold pendants in her ears, was at a side-window.

"Humph!" said the rich burgher of Antwerp, with a sulky glance at the stranger.

"De duyvel!" said the fat little distiller of Schiedam.

The landlord saw, with the quick glance of a publican, that the new guest was not at all to the taste of the old ones; and, to tell the truth, he did not like my grandfather's saucy eye. He shook his head. "Not a garret in the house but was full."

"Not a garret!" echoed the landlady.

"Not a garret!" echoed the daughter.

The burgher of Antwerp, and the little distiller of Schiedam, continued to smoke their pipes sullenly, eyeing the enemy askance from under their broad hats, but said nothing.

My grandfather was not a man to be browbeaten. He

threw the reins on his horse's neck, cocked his head on one side, stuck one arm akimbo,—"Faith and troth!" said he, "but I'll sleep in this house this very night."—As he said this he gave a slap on his thigh, by way of emphasis—the slap went to the landlady's heart.

He followed up the vow by jumping off his horse, and making his way past the staring Mynheers into the public room.—Maybe you've been in the bar-room of an old Flemish inn—faith, but a handsome chamber it was as you'd wish to see; with a brick floor, and a great fire-place, with the whole Bible history in glazed tiles, and then the mantelpiece, pitching itself head foremost out of the wall, with a whole regiment of cracked tea-pots and earthen jugs paraded on it; not to mention half a dozen great Delft platters, hung about the room by way of pictures; and the little bar in one corner, and the bouncing bar-maid inside of it, with a red calico cap, and yellow ear-drops.

My grandfather snapped his fingers over his head, as he cast an eye round the room,—"Faith, this is the very house I've been looking after," said he.

There was some further show of resistance on the part of the garrison; but my grandfather was an old soldier, and an Irishman to boot, and not easily repulsed, especially after he had got into the fortress. So he blarneyed the landlord, kissed the landlord's wife, tickled the landlord's daughter, chucked the bar-maid under the chin; and it was agreed on all hands that it

would be a thousand pities, and a burning shame into the bargain, to turn such a bold dragoon into the streets. So they laid their heads together, that is to say, my grandfather and the landlady, and it was at length agreed to accommodate him with an old chamber that had been for some time shut up.

"Some say it's haunted," whispered the landlord's daughter; "but you are a bold dragoon, and I dare say don't fear ghosts."

"The devil a bit!" said my grandfather, pinching her plump cheek. "But if I should be troubled by ghosts, I've been to the Red Sea in my time, and have a pleasant way of laying them, my darling."

And then he whispered something to the girl which made her laugh, and give him a good-humored box on the ear. In short, there was nobody knew better how to make his way among the petticoats than my grandfather.

In a little while, as was his usual way, he took complete possession of the house, swaggering all over it; into the stable to look after his horse, into the kitchen to look after his supper. He had something to say or do with every one; smoked with the Dutchmen, drank with the Germans, slapped the landlord on the shoulder, romped with his daughter and the bar-maid: — never, since the days of Alley Croaker, had such a rattling blade been seen. The landlord stared at him with astonishment; the landlord's daughter hung her head and giggled whenever he came near; and as he swag-

gered along the corridor, with his sword trailing by his side, the maids looked after him, and whispered to one another, "What a proper man!"

At supper, my grandfather took command of the table-d'hôte as though he had been at home; helped everybody, not forgetting himself; talked with every one, whether he understood their language or not; and made his way into the intimacy of the rich burgher of Antwerp, who had never been known to be sociable with any one during his life. In fact, he revolutionized the whole establishment, and gave it such a rouse, that the very house reeled with it. He outsat every one at table, excepting the little fat distiller of Schiedam, who sat soaking a long time before he broke forth; but when he did, he was a very devil incarnate. He took a violent affection for my grandfather; so they sat drinking and smoking, and telling stories, and singing Dutch and Irish songs, without understanding a word each other said, until the little Hollander was fairly swamped with his own gin and water, and carried off to bed, whooping and hiccuping, and trolling the burden of a Low Dutch love-song.

Well, gentlemen, my grandfather was shown to his quarters up a large staircase, composed of loads of hewn timber; and through long rigmarole passages, hung with blackened paintings of fish, and fruit, and game, and country frolics, and huge kitchens, and portly burgomasters, such as you see about old-fashioned Flemish inns, till at length he arrived at his room.

An old-times chamber it was, sure enough, and crowded with all kinds of trumpery. It looked like an infirmary for decayed and superannuated furniture, where everything diseased or disabled was sent to nurse or to be forgotten. Or rather it might be taken for a general congress of old legitimate movables, where every kind and country had a representative. No two chairs were alike. Such high backs and low backs, and leather bottoms, and worsted bottoms, and straw bottoms, and no bottoms; and cracked marble tables with curiously carved legs, holding balls in their claws, as though they were going to play at ninepins.

My grandfather made a bow to the motley assemblage as he entered, and, having undressed himself, placed his light in the fireplace, asking pardon of the tongs, which seemed to be making love to the shovel in the chimney-corner, and whispering soft nonsense in its ear.

The rest of the guests were by this time sound asleep, for your Mynheers are huge sleepers. The housemaids, one by one, crept up yawning to their attics; and not a female head in the inn was laid on a pillow that night without dreaming of the bold dragoon.

My grandfather, for his part, got into bed, and drew over him one of those great bags of down, under which they smother a man in the Low Countries; and there he lay, melting between two feather beds, like an anchovy sandwich between two slices of toast and butter. He was a warm-complexioned man, and this smothering

played the very deuce with him. So, sure enough, in a little time it seemed as if a legion of imps were twitching at him, and all the blood in his veins was in a fever-heat.

He lay still, however, until all the house was quiet, excepting the snoring of the Mynheers from the different chambers; who answered one another in all kinds of tones and cadences, like so many bull-frogs in a swamp. The quieter the house became, the more unquiet became my grandfather. He waxed warmer and warmer, until at length the bed became too hot to hold him.

"Maybe the maid had warmed it too much?" said the curious gentleman, inquiringly.

"I rather think the contrary," replied the Irishman. "But, be that as it may, it grew too hot for my grandfather."

"Faith, there's no standing this any longer," says he. So he jumped out of bed, and went strolling about the house.

"What for?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"Why, to cool himself, to be sure—or perhaps to find a more comfortable bed—or perhaps— But no matter what he went for—he never mentioned—and there's no use in taking up our time in conjecturing."

Well, my grandfather had been for some time absent from his room, and was returning, perfectly cool, when just as he reached the door, he heard a strange noise within. He paused and listened. It seemed as if some one were trying to hum a tune in defiance of the asthma.

He recollected the report of the room being haunted; but he was no believer in ghosts, so he pushed the door gently open and peeped in.

Egad, gentlemen, there was a gambol carrying on within enough to have astonished St. Anthony himself. By the light of the fire he saw a pale weazen-faced fellow, in a long flannel gown and a tall white night-cap with a tassel to it, who sat by the fire with a bellows under his arm by way of bagpipe, from which he forced the asthmatical music that had bothered my grandfather. As he played, too, he kept twitching about with a thousand queer contortions, nodding his head, and bobbing about his tasselled night-cap.

My grandfather thought this very odd and mighty presumptuous, and was about to demand what business he had to play his wind-instrument in another gentleman's quarters, when a new cause of astonishment met his eye. From the opposite side of the room a long-backed, bandy-legged chair, covered with leather, and studded all over in a coxcombical fashion with little brass nails, got suddenly into motion, thrust out first a claw-foot, then a crooked arm, and at length, making a leg, slided gracefully up to an easy-chair of tarnished brocade, with a hole in its bottom, and led it gallantly out in a ghostly minuet about the floor.

The musician now played fiercer and fiercer, and bobbed his head and his night-cap about like mad. By degrees the dancing mania seemed to seize upon all

other pieces of furniture. The antique, long-bodied chairs paired off in couples and led down a country-dance; a three-legged stool danced a hornpipe, though horribly puzzled by its supernumerary limb; while the amorous tongs seized the shovel round the waist, and whirled it about the room in a German waltz. In short, all the movables got in motion: pirouetting hands across, right and left, like so many devils; all except a great clothes-press, which kept courtesying and courtesying in a corner, like a dowager, in exquisite time to the music; being rather too corpulent to dance, or perhaps at a loss for a partner.

My grandfather concluded the latter to be the reason; so being, like a true Irishman, devoted to the sex, and at all times ready for a frolic, he bounced into the room, called to the musician to strike up Paddy O'Rafferty, capered up to the clothes-press, and seized upon the two handles to lead her out:——when—whirr! the whole revel was at an end. The chairs, tables, tongs and shovel, slunk in an instant as quietly into their places as if nothing had happened, and the musician vanished up the chimney, leaving the bellows behind him in his hurry. My grandfather found himself seated in the middle of the floor with the clothes-press sprawling before him, and the two handles jerked off, and in his hands.

"Then, after all, this was a mere dream!" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"The divil a bit of a dream!" replied the Irishman.

"There never was a truer fact in this world. Faith, I should have liked to see any man tell my grandfather it was a dream."

Well, gentlemen, as the clothes-press was a mighty heavy body, and my grandfather likewise, particularly in rear, you may easily suppose that two such heavy bodies coming to the ground would make a bit of a noise. Faith, the old mansion shook as though it had mistaken it for an earthquake. The whole garrison was alarmed. The landlord, who slept below, hurried up with a candle to inquire the cause, but with all his haste his daughter had arrived at the scene of uproar before him. The landlord was followed by the landlady, who was followed by the bouncing bar-maid, who was followed by the simpering chambermaids, all holding together, as well as they could, such garments as they first laid hands on; but all in a terrible hurry to see what the deuce was to pay in the chamber of the bold dragoon.

My grandfather related the marvellous scene he had witnessed, and the broken handles of the prostrate clothes-press bore testimony to the fact. There was no contesting such evidence; particularly with a lad of my grandfather's complexion, who seemed able to make good every word either with sword or shillelah. So the landlord scratched his head and looked silly, as he was apt to do when puzzled. The landlady scratched—no, she did not scratch her head, but she knit her brow, and did not seem half pleased with the explanation. But the

landlady's daughter corroborated it by recollecting that the last person who had dwelt in that chamber was a famous juggler who died of St. Vitus's dance, and had no doubt infected all the furniture.

This set all things to rights, particularly when the chambermaids declared that they had all witnessed strange carryings on in that room; and as they declared this "upon their honors," there could not remain a doubt upon this subject.

"And did your grandfather go to bed again in that room?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"That's more than I can tell. Where he passed the rest of the night was a secret he never disclosed. In fact, though he had seen much service, he was but indifferently acquainted with geography, and apt to make blunders in his travels about inns at night, which it would have puzzled him sadly to account for in the morning."

"Was he ever apt to walk in his sleep?" said the knowing old gentleman.

"Never that I heard of."

There was a little pause after this rigmarole Irish romance, when the old gentleman with the haunted head observed, that the stories hitherto related had rather a burlesque tendency. "I recollect an adventure, however," added he, "which I heard of during a residence at Paris, for the truth of which I can undertake to vouch, and which is of a very grave and singular nature."

ADVENTURE OF THE GERMAN STUDENT.

N a stormy night, in the tempestuous times of the French revolution, a young German was returning to his lodgings, at a late hour, across the old part of Paris. The lightning gleamed, and the loud claps of thunder rattled through the lofty narrow streets—but I should first tell you something about this young German.

Gottfried Wolfgang was a young man of good family. He had studied for some time at Göttingen, but being of a visionary and enthusiastic character, he had wandered into those wild and speculative doctrines which have so often bewildered German students. His secluded life, his intense application, and the singular nature of his studies, had an effect on both mind and body. His health was impaired; his imagination diseased. He had been indulging in fanciful speculations on spiritual essences, until, like Swedenborg, he had an ideal world of his own around him. He took up a notion, I do not know from what cause, that there was an evil influence hanging over him; an evil genius or spirit seeking to ensnare him and ensure his perdition. Such an idea working on his

melancholy temperament, produced the most gloomy effects. He became haggard and desponding. His friends discovered the mental malady preying upon him, and determined that the best cure was a change of scene; he was sent, therefore, to finish his studies amid the splendors and gayeties of Paris.

Wolfgang arrived at Paris at the breaking out of the revolution. The popular delirium at first caught his enthusiastic mind, and he was captivated by the political and philosophical theories of the day: but the scenes of blood which followed shocked his sensitive nature, disgusted him with society and the world, and made him more than ever a recluse. He shut himself up in a solitary apartment in the *Pays Latin*, the quarter of students. There, in a gloomy street not far from the monastic walls of the Sorbonne, he pursued his favorite speculations. Sometimes he spent hours together in the great libraries of Paris, those catacombs of departed authors, rummaging among their hoards of dusty and obsolete works in quest of food for his unhealthy appetite. He was, in a manner, a literary ghoul, feeding in the charnel-house of decayed literature.

Wolfgang, though solitary and recluse, was of an ardent temperament, but for a time it operated merely upon his imagination. He was too shy and ignorant of the world to make any advances to the fair, but he was a passionate admirer of female beauty, and in his lonely chamber would often lose himself in reveries on

forms and faces which he had seen, and his fancy would deck out images of loveliness far surpassing the reality.

While his mind was in this excited and sublimated state, a dream produced an extraordinary effect upon him. It was of a female face of transcendent beauty. So strong was the impression made, that he dreamt of it again and again. It haunted his thoughts by day, his slumbers by night; in fine, he became passionately enamoured of this shadow of a dream. This lasted so long that it became one of those fixed ideas which haunt the minds of melancholy men, and are at times mistaken for madness.

Such was Gottfried Wolfgang, and such his situation at the time I mentioned. He was returning home late one stormy night, through some of the old and gloomy streets of the *Marais*, the ancient part of Paris. The loud claps of thunder rattled among the high houses of the narrow streets. He came to the Place de Grève, the square where public executions are performed. The lightning quivered about the pinnacles of the ancient Hôtel de Ville, and shed flickering gleams over the open space in front. As Wolfgang was crossing the square, he shrank back with horror at finding himself close by the guillotine. It was the height of the reign of terror, when this dreadful instrument of death stood ever ready, and its scaffold was continually running with the blood of the virtuous and the brave. It had that very day been ac-

tively employed in the work of carnage, and there it stood in grim array, amidst a silent and sleeping city, waiting for fresh victims.

Wolfgang's heart sickened within him, and he was turning shuddering from the horrible engine, when he beheld a shadowy form, cowering as it were at the foot of the steps which led up to the scaffold. A succession of vivid flashes of lightning revealed it more distinctly. It was a female figure, dressed in black. She was seated on one of the lower steps of the scaffold, leaning forward, her face hid in her lap; and her long dishevelled tresses hanging to the ground, streaming with the rain which fell in torrents. Wolfgang paused. There was something awful in this solitary monument of woe. The female had the appearance of being above the common order. He knew the times to be full of vicissitude, and that many a fair head, which had once been pillowed on down, now wandered houseless. Perhaps this was some poor mourner whom the dreadful axe had rendered desolate, and who sat here heart-broken on the strand of existence, from which all that was dear to her had been launched into eternity.

He approached, and addressed her in the accents of sympathy. She raised her head and gazed wildly at him. What was his astonishment at beholding, by the bright glare of the lightning, the very face which had haunted him in his dreams. It was pale and disconsolate, but ravishingly beautiful.

Trembling with violent and conflicting emotions, Wolfgang again accosted her. He spoke something of her being exposed at such an hour of the night, and to the fury of such a storm, and offered to conduct her to her friends. She pointed to the guillotine with a gesture of dreadful signification.

"I have no friend on earth!" said she.

"But you have a home," said Wolfgang.

"Yes—in the grave!"

The heart of the student melted at the words.

"If a stranger dare make an offer," said he, "without danger of being misunderstood, I would offer my humble dwelling as a shelter; myself as a devoted friend. I am friendless myself in Paris, and a stranger in the land; but if my life could be of service, it is at your disposal, and should be sacrificed before harm or indignity should come to you."

There was an honest earnestness in the young man's manner that had its effect. His foreign accent, too, was in his favor; it showed him not to be a hackneyed inhabitant of Paris. Indeed, there is an eloquence in true enthusiasm that is not to be doubted. The homeless stranger confided herself implicitly to the protection of the student.

He supported her faltering steps across the Pont Neuf, and by the place where the statue of Henry the Fourth had been overthrown by the populace. The storm had abated, and the thunder rumbled at a distance. All

Paris was quiet; that great volcano of human passion slumbered for a while, to gather fresh strength for the next day's eruption. The student conducted his charge through the ancient streets of the *Pays Latin*, and by the dusky walls of the Sorbonne, to the great dingy hotel which he inhabited. The old portress who admitted them stared with surprise at the unusual sight of the melancholy Wolfgang with a female companion.

On entering his apartment, the student, for the first time, blushed at the scantiness and indifference of his dwelling. He had but one chamber—an old-fashioned saloon—heavily carved, and fantastically furnished with the remains of former magnificence, for it was one of those hotels in the quarter of the Luxembourg palace, which had once belonged to nobility. It was lumbered with books and papers, and all the usual apparatus of a student, and his bed stood in a recess at one end.

When lights were brought, and Wolfgang had a better opportunity of contemplating the stranger, he was more than ever intoxicated by her beauty. Her face was pale, but of a dazzling fairness, set off by a profusion of raven hair that hung clustering about it. Her eyes were large and brilliant, with a singular expression approaching almost to wildness. As far as her black dress permitted her shape to be seen, it was of perfect symmetry. Her whole appearance was highly striking, though she was dressed in the simplest style. The only thing approach-

ing to an ornament which she wore, was a broad black band round her neck, clasped by diamonds.

The perplexity now commenced with the student how to dispose of the helpless being thus thrown upon his protection. He thought of abandoning his chamber to her, and seeking shelter for himself elsewhere. Still, he was so fascinated by her charms, there seemed to be such a spell upon his thoughts and senses, that he could not tear himself from her presence. Her manner, too, was singular and unaccountable. She spoke no more of the guillotine. Her grief had abated. The attentions of the student had first won her confidence, and then, apparently, her heart. She was evidently an enthusiast like himself, and enthusiasts soon understand each other.

In the infatuation of the moment, Wolfgang avowed his passion for her. He told her the story of his mysterious dream, and how she had possessed his heart before he had even seen her. She was strangely affected by his recital, and acknowledged to have felt an impulse towards him equally unaccountable. It was the time for wild theory and wild actions. Old prejudices and superstitions were done away; everything was under the sway of the "Goddess of Reason." Among other rubbish of the old times, the forms and ceremonies of marriage began to be considered superfluous bonds for honorable minds. Social compacts were the vogue. Wolfgang was too much of a theorist not to be tainted by the liberal doctrines of the day.

"Why should we separate?" said he: "our hearts are united; in the eye of reason and honor we are as one. What need is there of sordid forms to bind high souls together?"

The stranger listened with emotion: she had evidently received illumination at the same school.

"You have no home nor family," continued he: "let me be everything to you, or rather let us be everything to one another. If form is necessary, form shall be observed—there is my hand. I pledge myself to you forever."

"Forever?" said the stranger, solemnly.

"Forever!" replied Wolfgang.

The stranger clasped the hand extended to her: "Then I am yours," murmured she, and sank upon his bosom.

The next morning the student left his bride sleeping, and sallied forth at an early hour to seek more spacious apartments suitable to the change in his situation. When he returned, he found the stranger lying with her head hanging over the bed, and one arm thrown over it. He spoke to her, but received no reply. He advanced to awaken her from her uneasy posture. On taking her hand, it was cold—there was no pulsation—her face was pallid and ghastly. In a word, she was a corpse.

Horrified and frantic, he alarmed the house. A scene of confusion ensued. The police was summoned. As

the officer of police entered the room, he started back on beholding the corpse.

"Great heaven!" cried he, "how did this woman come here?"

"Do you know anything about her?" said Wolfgang eagerly.

"Do I?" exclaimed the officer: "she was guillotined yesterday.

He stepped forward; undid the black collar round the neck of the corpse, and the head rolled on the floor!

The student burst into a frenzy. "The fiend! the fiend has gained possession of me!" shrieked he: "I am lost forever."

They tried to soothe him, but in vain. He was possessed with the frightful belief that an evil spirit had reanimated the dead body to ensnare him. He went distracted, and died in a mad-house.

Here the old gentleman with the haunted head finished his narrative.

"And is this really a fact?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"A fact not to be doubted," replied the other. "I had it from the best authority. The student told it me himself. I saw him in a mad-house in Paris."

ADVENTURE OF THE MYSTERIOUS PICTURE.

AS one story of a kind produces another, and as all the company seemed fully engrossed with the subject, and disposed to bring their relatives and ancestors upon the scene, there is no knowing how many more strange adventures we might have heard, had not a corpulent old fox-hunter, who had slept soundly through the whole, now suddenly awakened, with a loud and long-drawn yawn. The sound broke the charm: the ghosts took to flight, as though it had been cock-crowing, and there was a universal move for bed.

"And now for the haunted chamber," said the Irish Captain, taking his candle.

"Ay, who's to be the hero of the night?" said the gentleman with the ruined head.

"That we shall see in the morning," said the old gentleman with the nose: "whoever looks pale and grizzly will have seen the ghost."

"Well, gentlemen," said the Baronet, "there's many a true thing said in jest—in fact, one of you will sleep in the room to-night"——

"What—a haunted room?—a haunted room?—I claim

the adventure—and I—and I—and I," said a dozen guests, talking and laughing at the same time.

"No, no," said mine host, "there is a secret about one of my rooms on which I feel disposed to try an experiment: so, gentlemen, none of you shall know who has the haunted chamber until circumstances reveal it. I will not even know it myself, but will leave it to chance and the allotment of the housekeeper. At the same time, if it will be any satisfaction to you, I will observe, for the honor of my paternal mansion, that there's scarcely a chamber in it but is well worthy of being haunted."

We now separated for the night, and each went to his allotted room. Mine was in one wing of the building, and I could not but smile at its resemblance in style to those eventful apartments described in the tales of the supper-table. It was spacious and gloomy, decorated with lamp-black portraits; a bed of ancient damask, with a tester sufficiently lofty to grace a couch of state, and a number of massive pieces of old-fashioned furniture. I drew a great claw-footed arm-chair before the wide fire-place; stirred up the fire; sat looking into it, and musing upon the odd stories I had heard, until, partly overcome by the fatigue of the day's hunting, and partly by the wine and wassail of mine host, I fell asleep in my chair.

The uneasiness of my position made my slumber troubled, and laid me at the mercy of all kinds of wild

and fearful dreams. Now it was that my perfidious dinner and supper rose in rebellion against my peace. I was hag-ridden by a fat saddle of mutton; a plum-pudding weighed like lead upon my conscience; the merry-thought of a capon filled me with horrible suggestions; and a devilled leg of a turkey stalked in all kinds of diabolical shapes through my imagination. In short, I had a violent fit of the nightmare. Some strange, indefinite evil seemed hanging over me which I could not avert; something terrible and loathsome oppressed me which I could not shake off. I was conscious of being asleep, and strove to rouse myself, but every effort redoubled the evil; until gasping, struggling, almost strangling, I suddenly sprang bolt upright in my chair, and awoke.

The light on the mantel-piece had burnt low, and the wick was divided; there was a great winding-sheet made by the dripping wax on the side towards me. The disordered taper emitted a broad flaring flame, and threw a strong light on a painting over the fireplace which I had not hitherto observed. It consisted merely of a head, or rather a face, staring full upon me, with an expression that was startling. It was without a frame, and at the first glance I could hardly persuade myself that it was not a real face thrusting itself out of the dark oaken panel. I sat in my chair gazing at it, and the more I gazed, the more it disquieted me. I had never before been affected in the same way by any painting. The emotions it caused were strange and indefinite. They

were something like what I have heard ascribed to the eyes of the basilisk, or like that mysterious influence in reptiles termed fascination. I passed my hand over my eyes several times, as if seeking instinctively to brush away the illusion—in vain. They instantly reverted to the picture, and its chilling, creeping influence over my flesh and blood was redoubled. I looked round the room on other pictures, either to divert my attention, or to see whether the same effect would be produced by them. Some of them were grim enough to produce the effect, if the mere grimness of the painting produced it.—No such thing—my eye passed over them all with perfect indifference, but the moment it reverted to this visage over the fireplace, it was as if an electric shock darted through me. The other pictures were dim and faded, but this one protruded from a plain background in the strongest relief, and with wonderful truth of coloring. The expression was that of agony—the agony of intense bodily pain; but a menace scowled upon the brow, and a few sprinklings of blood added to its ghastliness. Yet it was not all these characteristics; it was some horror of the mind, some inscrutable antipathy awakened by this picture, which harrowed up my feelings.

I tried to persuade myself that this was chimerical, that my brain was confused by the fumes of mine host's good cheer, and in some measure by the odd stories about paintings which had been told at supper. I determined to shake off these vapors of the mind; rose

from my chair; walked about the room; snapped my fingers; rallied myself; laughed aloud.—It was a forced laugh, and the echo of it in the old chamber jarred upon my ear.—I walked to the window, and tried to discern the landscape through the glass. It was pitch darkness, and a howling storm without; and as I heard the wind moan among the trees, I caught a reflection of this accursed visage in the pane of glass, as though it were staring through the window at me. Even the reflection of it was thrilling.

How was this vile nervous fit, for such I now persuaded myself it was, to be conquered? I determined to force myself not to look at the painting, but to undress quickly and get into bed.—I began to undress, but in spite of every effort I could not keep myself from stealing a glance every now and then at the picture; and a glance was sufficient to distress me. Even when my back was turned to it, the idea of this strange face behind me, peeping over my shoulder, was insupportable. I threw off my clothes and hurried into bed, but still this visage gazed upon me. I had a full view of it in my bed, and for some time could not take my eyes from it. I had grown nervous to a dismal degree. I put out the light, and tried to force myself to sleep—all in vain. The fire gleaming up a little, threw an uncertain light about the room, leaving, however, the region of the picture in deep shadow. What, thought I, if this be the chamber about which mine host spoke as having a mystery reigning over

it? I had taken his words merely as spoken in jest; might they have a real import? I looked around. The faintly lighted apartment had all the qualifications requisite for a haunted chamber. It began in my infected imagination to assume strange appearances—the old portraits turned paler and paler, and blacker and blacker; the streaks of light and shadow thrown among the quaint articles of furniture gave them more singular shapes and characters.—There was a huge dark clothes-press of antique form, gorgeous in brass and lustrous with wax, that began to grow oppressive to me.

"Am I then," thought I, "indeed the hero of the haunted room? Is there really a spell laid upon me, or is this all some contrivance of mine host to raise a laugh at my expense?" The idea of being hag-ridden by my own fancy all night, and then bantered on my haggard looks the next day, was intolerable; but the very idea was sufficient to produce the effect, and to render me still more nervous.—"Pish," said I, "it can be no such thing. How could my worthy host imagine that I, or any man, would be so worried by a mere picture? It is my own diseased imagination that torments me."

I turned in bed, and shifted from side to side, to try to fall asleep; but all in vain; when one cannot get asleep by lying quiet, it is seldom that tossing about will effect the purpose. The fire gradually went out, and left the room in total darkness. Still I had the idea of that inexplicable countenance gazing and keeping watch upon me

through the gloom—nay, what was worse, the very darkness seemed to magnify its terrors. It was like having an unseen enemy hanging about one in the night. Instead of having one picture now to worry me, I had a hundred. I fancied it in every direction—"There it is," thought I, "and there! and there! with its horrible and mysterious expression still gazing and gazing on me! No—if I must suffer the strange and dismal influence, it were better face a single foe than thus be haunted by a thousand images of it."

Whoever has been in a state of nervous agitation, must know that the longer it continues the more uncontrollable it grows. The very air of the chamber seemed at length infected by the baleful presence of this picture. I fancied it hovering over me. I almost felt the fearful visage from the wall approaching my face—it seemed breathing upon me. "This is not to be borne," said I, at length, springing out of bed: "I can stand this no longer—I shall only tumble and toss about here all night; make a very spectre of myself, and become the hero of the haunted chamber in good earnest. Whatever be the ill consequences, I'll quit this cursed room and seek a night's rest elsewhere—they can but laugh at me, at all events, and they'll be sure to have the laugh upon me if I pass a sleepless night, and show them a haggard and woe-begone visage in the morning."

All this was half-muttered to myself as I hastily slipped on my clothes, which having done, I groped my

way out of the room and down-stairs to the drawing-room. Here, after tumbling over two or three pieces of furniture, I made out to reach a sofa, and stretching myself upon it, determined to bivouac there for the night. The moment I found myself out of the neighborhood of that strange picture, it seemed as if the charm were broken. All its influence was at an end. I felt assured that it was confined to its own dreary chamber, for I had, with a sort of instinctive caution, turned the key when I closed the door. I soon calmed down, therefore, into a state of tranquillity; from that into a drowsiness, and finally into a deep sleep; out of which I did not awake until the housemaid, with her besom and her matin-song, came to put the room in order. She stared at finding me stretched upon the sofa, but I presume circumstances of the kind were not uncommon after hunting-dinners in her master's bachelor establishment, for she went on with her song and her work, and took no further heed of me.

I had an unconquerable repugnance to return to my chamber; so I found my way to the butler's quarters, made my toilet in the best way circumstances would permit, and was among the first to appear at the breakfast-table. Our breakfast was a substantial fox-hunter's repast, and the company generally assembled at it. When ample justice had been done to the tea, coffee, cold meats, and humming ale, for all these were furnished in abundance, according to the tastes of the different guests, the con-

versation began to break out with all the liveliness and freshness of morning mirth.

"But who is the hero of the haunted chamber—who has seen the ghost last night?" said the inquisitive gentleman, rolling his lobster-eyes about the table.

The question set every tongue in motion; a vast deal of bantering, criticizing of countenances, of mutual accusation and retort took place. Some had drunk deep, and some were unshaven, so that there were suspicious faces enough in the assembly. I alone could not enter with ease and vivacity into the joke—I felt tongue-tied, embarrassed. A recollection of what I had seen and felt the preceding night still haunted my mind. It seemed as if the mysterious picture still held a thrall upon me. I thought also that our host's eye was turned on me with an air of curiosity. In short, I was conscious that I was the hero of the night, and felt as if every one might read it in my looks. The joke, however, passed over, and no suspicion seemed to attach to me. I was just congratulating myself on my escape, when a servant came in saying, that the gentlemen who had slept on the sofa in the drawing-room had left his watch under one of the pillows. My repeater was in his hand.

"What!" said the inquisitive gentleman, "did any gentleman sleep on the sofa?"

"Soho! soho! a hare—a hare!" cried the old gentleman with the flexible nose.

I could not avoid acknowledging the watch, and was

rising in great confusion, when a boisterous old squire who sat beside me exclaimed, slapping me on the shoulder, "'Sblood, lad, thou art the man as has seen the ghost!"

The attention of the company was immediately turned on me: if my face had been pale the moment before, it now glowed almost to burning. I tried to laugh, but could only make a grimace, and found the muscles of my face twitching at sixes and sevens, and totally out of all control.

It takes but little to raise a laugh among a set of fox-hunters; there was a world of merriment and joking on the subject, and as I never relished a joke overmuch when it was at my own expense, I began to feel a little nettled. I tried to look cool and calm, and to restrain my pique; but the coolness and calmness of a man in a passion are confounded treacherous.

"Gentlemen," said I, with a slight cocking of the chin and a bad attempt at a smile, "this is all very pleasant—ha! ha!—very pleasant—but I'd have you know, I am as little superstitious as any of you—ha! ha!—and as to anything like timidity—you may smile, gentlemen, but I trust there's no one here means to insinuate, that—as to a room's being haunted—I repeat, gentlemen, (growing a little warm at seeing a cursed grin breaking out round me,) as to a room's being haunted, I have as little faith in such silly stories as any one. But, since you put the matter home to me, I will say that I have met with some-

thing in my room strange and inexplicable to me. (A shout of laughter.) Gentlemen, I am serious; I know well what I am saying; I am calm, gentlemen, (striking my fist upon the table,) by Heaven I am calm. I am neither trifling, nor do I wish to be trifled with. (The laughter of the company suppressed, and with ludicrous attempts at gravity.) There is a picture in the room in which I was put last night, that has had an effect upon me the most singular and incomprehensible."

"A picture?" said the old gentleman with the haunted head. "A picture!" cried the narrator with the nose. "A picture! a picture!" echoed several voices. Here there was an ungovernable peal of laughter. I could not contain myself. I started up from my seat; looked round on the company with fiery indignation; thrust both of my hands into my pockets, and strode up to one of the windows as though I would have walked through it. I stopped short, looked out upon the landscape without distinguishing a feature of it, and felt my gorge rising almost to suffocation.

Mine host saw it was time to interfere. He had maintained an air of gravity through the whole of the scene; and now stepped forth, as if to shelter me from the overwhelming merriment of my companions.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I dislike to spoil sport, but you have had your laugh, and the joke of the haunted chamber has been enjoyed. I must now take the part of

my guest. I must not only vindicate him from your pleasantries, but I must reconcile him to himself, for I suspect he is a little out of humor with his own feelings; and, above all, I must crave his pardon for having made him the subject of a kind of experiment. Yes, gentlemen, there is something strange and peculiar in the chamber to which our friend was shown last night; there is a picture in my house which possesses a singular and mysterious influence, and with which there is connected a very curious story. It is a picture to which I attach a value from a variety of circumstances; and though I have often been tempted to destroy it, from the odd and uncomfortable sensations which it produces in every one that beholds it, yet I have never been able to prevail upon myself to make the sacrifice. It is a picture I never like to look upon myself, and which is held in awe by all my servants. I have therefore banished it to a room but rarely used, and should have had it covered last night, had not the nature of our conversation, and the whimsical talk about a haunted chamber, tempted me to let it remain, by way of experiment, to see whether a stranger, totally unacquainted with its story, would be affected by it."

The words of the Baronet had turned every thought into a different channel. All were anxious to hear the story of the mysterious picture; and, for myself, so strangely were my feelings interested, that I forgot to feel piqued at the experiment my host had made upon

my nerves, and joined eagerly in the general entreaty. As the morning was stormy, and denied all egress, my host was glad of any means of entertaining his company; so, drawing his arm-chair towards the fire, he began.

ADVENTURE OF THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.

MANY years since, when I was a young man, and had just left Oxford, I was sent on the grand tour to finish my education. I believe my parents had tried in vain to inoculate me with wisdom; so they sent me to mingle with society, in hopes that I might take it the natural way. Such, at least, appears the reason for which nine-tenths of our youngsters are sent abroad. In the course of my tour I remained some time at Venice. The romantic character of that place delighted me; I was very much amused by the air of adventure and intrigue prevalent in this region of masks and gondolas; and I was exceedingly smitten by a pair of languishing black eyes, that played upon my heart from under an Italian mantle; so I persuaded myself that I was lingering at Venice to study men and manners; at least I persuaded my friends so, and that answered all my purposes.

I was a little prone to be struck by peculiarities in character and conduct, and my imagination was so full of romantic associations with Italy that I was always on

the look-out for adventure. Everything chimed in with such a humor in this old mermaid of a city. My suite of apartments were in a proud, melancholy palace on the grand canal, formerly the residence of a magnifico, and sumptuous with the traces of decayed grandeur. My gondolier was one of the shrewdest of his class, active, merry, intelligent, and, like his brethren, secret as the grave; that is to say, secret to all the world except his master. I had not had him a week before he put me behind all the curtains in Venice. I liked the silence and mystery of the place, and when I sometimes saw from my window a black gondola gliding mysteriously along in the dusk of the evening, with nothing visible but its little glimmering lantern, I would jump into my own zendeletta, and give a signal for pursuit—"But I am running away from my subject with the recollection of youthful follies," said the Baronet, checking himself. "Let us come to the point."

Among my familiar resorts was a casino under the arcades on one side of the grand square of St. Mark. Here I used frequently to lounge and take my ice, on those warm summer-nights, when in Italy everybody lives abroad until morning. I was seated here one evening, when a group of Italians took their seat at a table on the opposite side of the saloon. Their conversation was gay and animated, and carried on with Italian vivacity and gesticulation. I remarked among them one young man, however, who appeared to take no share,

and find no enjoyment in the conversation, though he seemed to force himself to attend to it. He was tall and slender, and of extremely prepossessing appearance. His features were fine, though emaciated. He had a profusion of black glossy hair, that curled lightly about his head, and contrasted with the extreme paleness of his countenance. His brow was haggard; deep furrows seemed to have been ploughed into his visage by care, not by age, for he was evidently in the prime of youth. His eye was full of expression and fire, but wild and unsteady. He seemed to be tormented by some strange fancy or apprehension. In spite of every effort to fix his attention on the conversation of his companions, I noticed that every now and then he would turn his head slowly round, give a glance over his shoulder, and then withdraw it with a sudden jerk, as if something painful met his eye. This was repeated at intervals of about a minute, and he appeared hardly to have recovered from one shock, before I saw him slowly preparing to encounter another.

After sitting some time in the casino, the party paid for the refreshment they had taken, and departed. The young man was the last to leave the saloon, and I remarked him glancing behind him in the same way, just as he passed out of the door. I could not resist the impulse to rise and follow him; for I was at an age when a romantic feeling of curiosity is easily awakened. The party walked slowly down the arcades, talking and

laughing as they went. They crossed the Piazetta, but paused in the middle of it to enjoy the scene. It was one of those moonlight nights, so brilliant and clear in the pure atmosphere of Italy. The moonbeams streamed on the tall tower of St. Mark, and lighted up the magnificent front and swelling domes of the cathedral. The party expressed their delight in animated terms. I kept my eye upon the young man. He alone seemed abstracted and self-occupied. I noticed the same singular and, as it were, furtive glance over the shoulder, which had attracted my attention in the casino. The party moved on, and I followed; they passed along the walk called the Broglio, turned the corner of the Ducal Palace, and getting into the gondola, glided swiftly away.

The countenance and conduct of this young man dwelt upon my mind, and interested me exceedingly. I met him a day or two afterwards in a gallery of paintings. He was evidently a connoisseur, for he always singled out the most masterly productions, and a few remarks drawn from him by his companions showed an intimate acquaintance with the art. His own taste, however, ran on singular extremes. On Salvator Rosa, in his most savage and solitary scenes; on Raphael, Titian, and Correggio, in their softest delineations of female beauty; on these he would occasionally gaze with transient enthusiasm. But this seemed only a momentary forgetfulness. Still would recur that cautious glance be-

hind, and always quickly withdrawn, as though something terrible met his view.

I encountered him frequently afterwards at the theatre, at balls, at concerts; at promenades in the gardens of San Georgio; at the grotesque exhibitions in the square of St. Mark; among the throng of merchants on the exchange by the Rialto. He seemed, in fact, to seek crowds; to hunt after bustle and amusement; yet never to take any interest in either the business or the gayety of the scene. Ever an air of painful thought, of wretched abstraction; and ever that strange and recurring movement of glancing fearfully over the shoulder. I did not know at first but this might be caused by apprehension of arrest; or, perhaps, from dread of assassination. But if so, why should he go thus continually abroad? why expose himself at all times and in all places?

I became anxious to know this stranger. I was drawn to him by that romantic sympathy which sometimes draws young men towards each other. His melancholy threw a charm about him, no doubt heightened by the touching expression of his countenance, and the manly graces of his person; for manly beauty has its effect even upon men. I had an Englishman's habitual diffidence and awkwardness to contend with; but from frequently meeting him in the casinos, I gradually edged myself into his acquaintance. I had no reserve on his part to contend with. He seemed, on the contrary, to court society; and, in fact, to seek any thing rather than be alone.

When he found that I really took an interest in him, he threw himself entirely on my friendship. He clung to me like a drowning man. He would walk with me for hours up and down the place of St. Mark—or would sit, until night was far advanced, in my apartments. He took rooms under the same roof with me; and his constant request was that I would permit him, when it did not incommode me, to sit by me in my saloon. It was not that he seemed to take a particular delight in my conversation, but rather that he craved the vicinity of a human being; and, above all, of a being that sympathized with him. "I have often heard," said he, "of the sincerity of Englishmen—thank God I have one at length for a friend!"

Yet he never seemed disposed to avail himself of my sympathy other than by mere companionship. He never sought to unbosom himself to me: there appeared to be a settled corroding anguish in his bosom that neither could be soothed "by silence nor by speaking."

A devouring melancholy preyed upon his heart, and seemed to be drying up the very blood in his veins. It was not a soft melancholy, the disease of the affections, but a parching, withering agony. I could see at times that his mouth was dry and feverish; he panted rather than breathed; his eyes were bloodshot; his cheeks pale and livid; with now and then faint streaks of red athwart them, baleful gleams of the fire that was consuming his heart. As my arm was within his, I felt him press it at

times with a convulsive motion to his side; his hands would clinch themselves involuntarily, and a kind of shudder would run through his frame.

I reasoned with him about his melancholy, sought to draw from him the cause; he shrunk from all confiding: "Do not seek to know it," said he, "you could not relieve it if you knew it; you would not even seek to relieve it. On the contrary, I should lose your sympathy, and that," said he, pressing my hand convulsively, "that I feel has become too dear to me to risk."

I endeavored to awaken hope within him. He was young; life had a thousand pleasures in store for him; there was a healthy reaction in the youthful heart; it medicines all its own wounds; "Come, come," said I, "there is no grief so great that youth cannot outgrow it." —"No! no!" said he, clinching his teeth, and striking repeatedly, with the energy of despair, on his bosom,— "it is here! here! deep-rooted; draining my heart's blood. It grows and grows, while my heart withers and withers. I have a dreadful monitor that gives me no repose—that follows me step by step—and will follow me step by step, until it pushes me into my grave!"

As he said this he involuntarily gave one of those fearful glances over his shoulder, and shrunk back with more than usual horror. I could not resist the temptation to allude to this movement, which I supposed to be some mere malady of the nerves. The moment I mentioned it,

his face became crimsoned and convulsed; he grasped me by both hands—

"For God's sake," exclaimed he, with a piercing voice, "never allude to that again.—Let us avoid this subject, my friend; you cannot relieve me, indeed you cannot relieve me, but you may add to the torments I suffer.—At some future day you shall know all."

I never resumed the subject; for however much my curiosity might be roused, I felt too true a compassion for his sufferings to increase them by my intrusion. I sought various ways to divert his mind, and to arouse him from the constant meditations in which he was plunged. He saw my efforts, and seconded them as far as in his power, for there was nothing moody or wayward in his nature. On the contrary, there was something frank, generous, unassuming, in his whole deportment. All the sentiments he uttered were noble and lofty. He claimed no indulgence, asked no toleration, but seemed content to carry his load of misery in silence, and only sought to carry it by my side. There was a mute beseeching manner about him, as if he craved companionship as a charitable boon; and a tacit thankfulness in his looks, as if he felt grateful to me for not repulsing him.

I felt this melancholy to be infectious. It stole over my spirits; interfered with all my gay pursuits, and gradually saddened my life; yet I could not prevail upon myself to shake off a being who seemed to hang upon me

for support. In truth, the generous traits of character which beamed through all his gloom penetrated to my heart. His bounty was lavish and open-handed; his charity melting and spontaneous; not confined to mere donations, which humiliate as much as they relieve. The tone of his voice, the beam of his eye, enhanced every gift, and surprised the poor suppliant with that rarest and sweetest of charities, the charity not merely of the hand, but of the heart. Indeed his liberality seemed to have something in it of self-abasement and expiation. He, in a manner, humbled himself before the mendicant. "What right have I to ease and affluence"—would he murmur to himself—"when innocence wanders in misery and rags?"

The carnival-time arrived. I hoped the gay scenes then presented might have some cheering effect. I mingled with him in the motley throng that crowded the place of St. Mark. We frequented operas, masquerades, balls—all in vain. The evil kept growing on him. He became more and more haggard and agitated. Often, after we had returned from one of these scenes of revelry, I have entered his room and found him lying on his face on the sofa; his hands clinched in his fine hair, and his whole countenance bearing traces of the convulsions of his mind.

The carnival passed away; the time of Lent succeeded; passion-week arrived; we attended one evening a solemn service in one of the churches, in the course of

which a grand piece of vocal and instrumental music was performed relating to the death of our Saviour.

I had remarked that he was always powerfully affected by music; on this occasion he was so in an extraordinary degree. As the pealing notes swelled through the lofty aisles, he seemed to kindle with fervor; his eyes rolled upwards, until nothing but the whites were visible; his hands were clasped together, until the fingers were deeply imprinted in the flesh. When the music expressed the dying agony, his face gradually sank upon his knees; and at the touching words resounding through the church, "*Gesu mori*," sobs burst from him uncontrolled—I had never seen him weep before. His had always been agony rather than sorrow. I augured well from the circumstance, and let him weep on uninterrupted. When the service was ended, we left the church. He hung on my arm as we walked homewards with something of a softer and more subdued manner, instead of that nervous agitation I had been accustomed to witness. He alluded to the service we had heard. "Music," said he, "is indeed the voice of heaven; never before have I felt more impressed by the story of the atonement of our Saviour—Yes, my friend," said he, clasping his hands with a kind of transport, "I know that my Redeemer liveth!"

We parted for the night. His room was not far from mine, and I heard him for some time busied in it. I fell asleep, but was awakened before daylight. The young man stood by my bedside, dressed for travelling. He

held a sealed packet and a large parcel in his hand, which he laid on the table.

"Farewell, my friend," said he, "I am about to set forth on a long journey; but, before I go, I leave with you these remembrances. In this packet you will find the particulars of my story. When you read them I shall be far away; do not remember me with aversion.—You have been indeed a friend to me.—You have poured oil into a broken heart, but you could not heal it. Farewell! let me kiss your hand—I am unworthy to embrace you." He sank on his knees, seized my hand in despite of my efforts to the contrary, and covered it with kisses. I was so surprised by all the scene, that I had not been able to say a word.—"But we shall meet again," said I, hastily, as I saw him hurrying towards the door. "Never, never, in this world!" said he, solemnly.—He sprang once more to my bedside—seized my hand, pressed it to his heart and to his lips, and rushed out of the room.

Here the Baronet paused. He seemed lost in thought, and sat looking upon the floor, and drumming with his fingers on the arm of his chair.

"And did this mysterious personage return?" said the inquisitive gentleman.

"Never!" replied the Baronet, with a pensive shake of the head,—"I never saw him again."

"And pray what has all this to do with the picture?" inquired the old gentleman with the nose.

"True," said the questioner; "is it the portrait of that crack-brained Italian?"

"No," said the Baronet, dryly, not half liking the appellation given to his hero; "but this picture was enclosed in the parcel he left with me. The sealed packet contained its explanation. There was a request on the outside that I would not open it until six months had elapsed. I kept my promise in spite of my curiosity. I have a translation of it by me, and had meant to read it, by way of accounting for the mystery of the chamber; but I fear I have already detained the company too long."

Here there was a general wish expressed to have the manuscript read, particularly on the part of the inquisitive gentleman; so the worthy Baronet drew out a fairly-written manuscript, and, wiping his spectacles, read aloud the following story.—

THE STORY OF THE YOUNG ITALIAN.

I WAS born at Naples. My parents, though of noble rank, were limited in fortune, or rather, my father was ostentatious beyond his means, and expended so much on his palace, his equipage, and his retinue, that he was continually straitened in his pecuniary circumstances. I was a younger son, and looked upon with indifference by my father, who, from a principle of family-pride, wished to leave all his property to my elder brother. I showed, when quite a child, an extreme sensibility. Everything affected me violently. While yet an infant in my mother's arms, and before I had learned to talk, I could be wrought upon to a wonderful degree of anguish or delight by the power of music. As I grew older, my feelings remained equally acute, and I was easily transported into paroxysms of pleasure or rage. It was the amusement of my relations and of the domestics to play upon this irritable temperament. I was moved to tears, tickled to laughter, provoked to fury, for the entertainment of company, who were amused by such a tempest of mighty passion in a pigmy frame; — they little thought, or perhaps little heeded the dangerous sensibilities they were fostering.

I thus became a little creature of passion before reason was developed. In a short time I grew too old to be a plaything, and then I became a torment. The tricks and passions I had been teased into became irksome, and I was disliked by my teachers for the very lessons they had taught me. My mother died; and my power as a spoiled child was at an end. There was no longer any necessity to humor or tolerate me, for there was nothing to be gained by it, as I was no favorite of my father. I therefore experienced the fate of a spoiled child in such a situation, and was neglected, or noticed only to be crossed and contradicted. Such was the early treatment of a heart which, if I can judge of it at all, was naturally disposed to the extremes of tenderness and affection.

My father, as I have already said, never liked me—in fact, he never understood me; he looked upon me as wilful and wayward, as deficient in natural affection. It was the stateliness of his own manner, the loftiness and grandeur of his own look, which had repelled me from his arms. I always pictured him to myself as I had seen him, clad in his senatorial robes, rustling with pomp and pride. The magnificence of his person daunted my young imagination. I could never approach him with the confiding affection of a child.

My father's feelings were wrapt up in my elder brother. He was to be the inheritor of the family-title and the family-dignity, and everything was sacri-

ficed to him—I, as well as everything else. It was determined to devote me to the Church, that so my humors and myself might be removed out of the way, either of tasking my father's time and trouble, or interfering with the interests of my brother. At an early age, therefore, before my mind had dawned upon the world and its delights, or known anything of it beyond the precincts of my father's palace, I was sent to a convent, the superior of which was my uncle, and was confided entirely to his care.

My uncle was a man totally estranged from the world: he had never relished, for he had never tasted its pleasures; and he regarded rigid self-denial as the great basis of Christian virtue. He considered every one's temperament like his own; or at least he made them conform to it. His character and habits had an influence over the fraternity of which he was superior: a more gloomy, saturnine set of beings were never assembled together. The convent, too, was calculated to awaken sad and solitary thoughts. It was situated in a gloomy gorge of those mountains away south of Vesuvius. All distant views were shut out by sterile volcanic heights. A mountain-stream raved beneath its walls, and eagles screamed about its turrets.

I had been sent to this place at so tender an age as soon to lose all distinct recollection of the scenes I had left behind. As my mind expanded, therefore, it formed its idea of the world from the convent and its vicinity,

and a dreary world it appeared to me. An early tinge of melancholy was thus infused into my character; and the dismal stories of the monks, about devils and evil spirits, with which they affrighted my young imagination, gave me a tendency to superstition which I could never effectually shake off. They took the same delight to work upon my ardent feelings, that had been so mischievously executed by my father's household. I can recollect the horrors with which they fed my heated fancy during an eruption of Vesuvius. We were distant from that volcano, with mountains between us; but its convulsive throes shook the solid foundations of nature. Earthquakes threatened to topple down our convent-towers. A lurid, baleful light hung in the heavens at night, and showers of ashes, borne by the wind, fell in our narrow valley. The monks talked of the earth being honeycombed beneath us; of streams of molten lava raging through its veins; of caverns of sulphurous flames roaring in the centre, the abodes of demons and the damned; of fiery gulfs ready to yawn beneath our feet. All these tales were told to the doleful accompaniment of the mountain's thunders, whose low bellowing made the walls of our convent vibrate.

One of the monks had been a painter, but had retired from the world, and embraced this dismal life in expiation of some crime. He was a melancholy man, who pursued his art in the solitude of his cell, but made it a source of penance to him. His employment was to por-

tray, either on canvas or in waxen models, the human face and human form, in the agonies of death, and in all the stages of dissolution and decay. The fearful mysteries of the charnel-house were unfolded in his labors; the loathsome banquet of the beetle and the worm. I turn with shuddering even from the recollection of his works; yet, at the time, my strong but ill-directed imagination seized with ardor upon his instructions in his art. Anything was a variety from the dry studies and monotonous duties of the cloister. In a little while I became expert with my pencil, and my gloomy productions were thought worthy of decorating some of the altars of the chapel.

In this dismal way was a creature of feeling and fancy brought up. Everything genial and amiable in my nature was repressed, and nothing brought out but what was unprofitable and ungracious. I was ardent in my temperament; quick, mercurial, impetuous, formed to be a creature all love and adoration; but a leaden hand was laid on all my finer qualities. I was taught nothing but fear and hatred. I hated my uncle. I hated the monks. I hated the convent in which I was immured. I hated the world; and I almost hated myself for being, as I supposed, so hating and hateful an animal.

When I had nearly attained the age of sixteen, I was suffered, on one occasion, to accompany one of the brethren on a mission to a distant part of the country. We soon left behind us the gloomy valley in which I had

been pent up for so many years, and after a short journey among the mountains, emerged upon the voluptuous landscape that spreads itself about the Bay of Naples. Heavens! how transported was I, when I stretched my gaze over a vast reach of delicious sunny country, gay with groves and vineyards: with Vesuvius rearing its forked summit to my right; the blue Mediterranean to my left, with its enchanting coast, studded with shining towns and sumptuous villas; and Naples, my native Naples, gleaming far, far in the distance.

Good God! was this the lovely world from which I had been excluded! I had reached that age when the sensibilities are in all their bloom and freshness. Mine had been checked and chilled. They now burst forth with the suddenness of a retarded spring-time. My heart, hitherto unnaturally shrunk up, expanded into a riot of vague but delicious emotions. The beauty of nature intoxicated—bewildered me. The song of the peasants; their cheerful looks; their happy avocations; the picturesque gayety of their dresses; their rustic music; their dances; all broke upon me like witchcraft. My soul responded to the music, my heart danced in my bosom. All the men appeared amiable, all the women lovely.

I returned to the convent; that is to say, my body returned, but my heart and soul never entered there again. I could not forget this glimpse of a beautiful and a happy world—a world so suited to my natural character. I had

felt so happy while in it; so different a being from what I felt myself when in the convent—that tomb of the living. I contrasted the countenances of the beings I had seen, full of fire and freshness and enjoyment, with the pallid, leaden, lack-lustre visages of the monks: the dance with the droning chant of the chapel. I had before found the exercises of the cloister wearisome, they now became intolerable. The dull round of duties wore away my spirit; my nerves became irritated by the fretful tinkling of the convent-bell, evermore dinging among the mountain-echoes, evermore calling me from my repose at night, my pencil by day, to attend to some tedious and mechanical ceremony of devotion.

I was not of a nature to meditate long without putting my thoughts into action. My spirit had been suddenly aroused, and was now all awake within me. I watched an opportunity, fled from the convent, and made my way on foot to Naples. As I entered its gay and crowded streets, and beheld the variety and stir of life around me, the luxury of palaces, the splendor of equipages, and the pantomimic animation of the motley populace, I seemed as if awakened to a world of enchantment, and solemnly vowed that nothing should force me back to the monotony of the cloister.

I had to inquire my way to my father's palace, for I had been so young on leaving it that I knew not its situation. I found some difficulty in getting admitted to my father's presence; for the domestics scarcely knew that

there was such a being as myself in existence, and my monastic dress did not operate in my favor. Even my father entertained no recollection of my person. I told him my name, threw myself at his feet, implored his forgiveness, and entreated that I might not be sent back to the convent.

He received me with the condescension of a patron, rather than the fondness of a parent; listened patiently, but coldly, to my tale of monastic grievances and disgusts, and promised to think what else could be done for me. This coldness blighted and drove back all the frank affection of my nature, that was ready to spring forth at the least warmth of parental kindness. All my early feelings towards my father revived. I again looked up to him as the stately magnificent being that had daunted my childish imagination, and felt as if I had no pretensions to his sympathies. My brother engrossed all his care and love; he inherited his nature, and carried himself towards me with a protecting rather than a fraternal air. It wounded my pride, which was great. I could brook condescension from my father, for I looked up to him with awe, as a superior being; but I could not brook patronage from a brother, who I felt was intellectually my inferior. The servants perceived that I was an unwelcome intruder in the paternal mansion, and, menial-like, they treated me with neglect. Thus baffled at every point, my affections outraged wherever they would attach themselves, I became sullen, silent, and desponding. My

feelings, driven back upon myself, entered and preyed upon my own heart. I remained for some days an unwelcome guest rather than a restored son in my father's house. I was doomed never to be properly known there. I was made, by wrong treatment, strange even to myself, and they judged of me from my strangeness.

I was startled one day at the sight of one of the monks of my convent gliding out of my father's room. He saw me, but pretended not to notice me, and this very hypocrisy made me suspect something. I had become sore and susceptible in my feelings, everything inflicted a wound on them. In this state of mind, I was treated with marked disrespect by a pampered minion, the favorite servant of my father. All the pride and passion of my nature rose in an instant, and I struck him to the earth. My father was passing by; he stopped not to inquire the reason, nor indeed could he read the long course of mental sufferings which were the real cause. He rebuked me with anger and scorn; summoning all the haughtiness of his nature and grandeur of his look to give weight to the contumely with which he treated me. I felt that I had not deserved it. I felt that I was not appreciated. I felt that I had that within me which merited better treatment. My heart swelled against a father's injustice. I broke through my habitual awe of him—I replied to him with impatience. My hot spirit flushed in my cheek and kindled in my eye; but my sensitive heart swelled as quickly and before I had half

vented my passion, I felt it suffocated and quenched in my tears. My father was astonished and incensed at this turning of the worm, and ordered me to my chamber. I retired in silence, choking with contending emotions.

I had not been long there when I overheard voices in an adjoining apartment. It was a consultation between my father and the monk, about the means of getting me back quietly to the convent. My resolution was taken. I had no longer a home nor a father. That very night I left the paternal roof. I got on board a vessel about making sail from the harbor, and abandoned myself to the wide world. No matter to what port she steered; any part of so beautiful a world was better than my convent. No matter where I was cast by fortune; any place would be more a home to me than the home I had left behind. The vessel was bound to Genoa. We arrived there after a voyage of a few days.

As I entered the harbor between the moles which embrace it, and beheld the amphitheatre of palaces, and churches, and splendid gardens, rising one above another, I felt at once its title to the appellation of Genoa the Superb. I landed on the mole an utter stranger, without knowing what to do, or whither to direct my steps. No matter: I was released from the thraldom of the convent and the humiliations of home. When I traversed the Strada Balbi and the Strada Nuova, those streets of palaces, and gazed at the wonders of architec-

ture around me; when I wandered at close of day amid a gay throng of the brilliant and the beautiful, through the green alleys of the Acquaverde, or among the colonnades and terraces of the magnificent Doria gardens; I thought it impossible to be ever otherwise than happy in Genoa. A few days sufficed to show me my mistake. My scanty purse was exhausted, and for the first time in my life I experienced the sordid distress of penury. I had never known the want of money, and had never adverted to the possibility of such an evil. I was ignorant of the world and all its ways; and when first the idea of destitution came over my mind, its effect was withering. I was wandering penniless through the streets which no longer delighted my eyes, when chance led my steps into the magnificent church of the Annunciata.

A celebrated painter of the day was at that moment superintending the placing of one of his pictures over an altar. The proficiency which I had acquired in his art during my residence in the convent, had made me an enthusiastic amateur. I was struck, at the first glance, with the painting. It was the face of a Madonna. So innocent, so lovely, such a divine expression of maternal tenderness! I lost, for the moment, all recollection of myself in the enthusiasm of my art. I clasped my hands together, and uttered an ejaculation of delight. The painter perceived my emotion. He was flattered and gratified by it. My air and manner pleased him, and he accosted me. I felt too much the want of friendship to repel the

advances of a stranger; and there was something in this one so benevolent and winning, that in a moment he gained my confidence.

I told him my story and my situation, concealing only my name and rank. He appeared strongly interested by my recital, invited me to his house, and from that time I became his favorite pupil. He thought he perceived in me extraordinary talents for the art, and his encomiums awakened all my ardor. What a blissful period of my existence was it that I passed beneath his roof! Another being seemed created within me; or rather, all that was amiable and excellent was drawn out. I was as recluse as ever I had been at the convent, but how different was my seclusion! My time was spent in storing my mind with lofty and poetical ideas; in meditating on all that was striking and noble in history and fiction; in studying and tracing all that was sublime and beautiful in nature. I was always a visionary, imaginative being, but now my reveries and imaginings all elevated me to rapture. I looked up to my master as to a benevolent genius that had opened to me a region of enchantment. He was not a native of Genoa, but had been drawn thither by the solicitations of several of the nobility, and had resided there but a few years, for the completion of certain works. His health was delicate, and he had to confide much of the filling up of his designs to the pencils of his scholars. He considered me as particularly happy in delineating the human countenance; in seizing upon

characteristic though fleeting expressions, and fixing them powerfully upon my canvas. I was employed continually, therefore, in sketching faces, and often, when some particular grace or beauty of expression was wanted in a countenance, it was intrusted to my pencil. My benefactor was fond of bringing me forward; and partly, perhaps, through my actual skill, and partly through his partial praises, I began to be noted for the expressions of my countenances.

Among the various works which he had undertaken, was an historical piece for one of the palaces of Genoa, in which were to be introduced the likenesses of several of the family. Among these was one intrusted to my pencil. It was that of a young girl, as yet in a convent for her education. She came out for the purpose of sitting for the picture. I first saw her in an apartment of one of the sumptuous palaces of Genoa. She stood before a casement that looked out upon the bay; a stream of vernal sunshine fell upon her, and shed a kind of glory round her, as it lit up the rich crimson chamber. She was but sixteen years of age—and oh, how lovely! The scene broke upon me like a mere vision of spring and youth and beauty. I could have fallen down and worshipped her. She was like one of those fictions of poets and painters, when they would express the *beau ideal* that haunts their minds with shapes of indescribable perfection. I was permitted to watch her countenance in various positions, and I fondly protracted the study that was

undoing me. The more I gazed on her, the more I became enamoured; there was something almost painful in my intense admiration. I was but nineteen years of age, shy, diffident, and inexperienced. I was treated with attention by her mother; for my youth and my enthusiasm in my art had won favor for me; and I am inclined to think something in my air and manner inspired interest and respect. Still the kindness with which I was treated could not dispel the embarrassment into which my own imagination threw me when in presence of this lovely being. It elevated her into something almost more than mortal. She seemed too exquisite for earthly use; too delicate and exalted for human attainment. As I sat tracing her charms on my canvas, with my eyes occasionally riveted on her features, I drank in delicious poison that made me giddy. My heart alternately gushed with tenderness, and ached with despair. Now I became more than ever sensible of the violent fires that had lain dormant at the bottom of my soul. You who were born in a more temperate climate, and under a cooler sky, have little idea of the violence of passion in our southern bosoms.

A few days finished my task. Bianca returned to her convent, but her image remained indelibly impressed upon my heart. It dwelt in my imagination; it became my pervading idea of beauty. It had an effect even upon my pencil. I became noted for my felicity in depicting female loveliness: it was but because I multiplied the

image of Bianca. I soothed and yet fed my fancy by introducing her in all the productions of my master. I have stood, with delight, in one of the chapels of the Annunciata, and heard the crowd extol the seraphic beauty of a saint which I had painted. I have seen them bow down in adoration before the painting; they were bowing before the loveliness of Bianca.

I existed in this kind of dream, I might almost say delirium, for upwards of a year. Such is the tenacity of my imagination, that the image formed in it continued in all its power and freshness. Indeed, I was a solitary, meditative being, much given to reverie, and apt to foster ideas which had once taken strong possession of me. I was roused from this fond, melancholy, delicious dream by the death of my worthy benefactor. I cannot describe the pangs his death occasioned me. It left me alone, and almost broken-hearted. He bequeathed to me his little property, which, from the liberality of his disposition, and his expensive style of living, was indeed but small; and he most particularly recommended me, in dying, to the protection of a nobleman who had been his patron.

The latter was a man who passed for munificent. He was a lover and an encourager of the arts, and evidently wished to be thought so. He fancied he saw in me indications of future excellence; my pencil had already attracted attention; he took me at once under his protection. Seeing that I was overwhelmed with grief, and

incapable of exerting myself in the mansion of my late benefactor, he invited me to sojourn for a time at a villa which he possessed on the border of the sea, in the picturesque neighborhood of Sestri di Ponente.

I found at the villa the count's only son, Filippo. He was nearly of my age; prepossessing in his appearance, and fascinating in his manners, he attached himself to me, and seemed to court my good opinion. I thought there was something of profession in his kindness, and of caprice in his disposition; but I had nothing else near me to attach myself to, and my heart felt the need of something to repose upon. His education had been neglected; he looked upon me as his superior in mental powers and acquirements, and tacitly acknowledged my superiority. I felt that I was his equal in birth, and that gave independence to my manners, which had its effect. The caprice and tyranny I saw sometimes exercised on others, over whom he had power, were never manifested towards me. We became intimate friends and frequent companions. Still I loved to be alone, and to indulge in the reveries of my own imagination among the scenery by which I was surrounded. The villa commanded a wide view of the Mediterranean, and of the picturesque Ligurian coast. It stood alone in the midst of ornamented grounds, finely decorated with statues and fountains, and laid out in groves and alleys and shady lawns. Everything was assembled here that could gratify the taste, or agreeably occupy the mind. Soothed by the

tranquillity of this elegant retreat, the turbulence of my feelings gradually subsided, and blending with the romantic spell which still reigned over my imagination, produced a soft, voluptuous melancholy.

I had not been long under the roof of the count, when our solitude was enlivened by another inhabitant. It was a daughter of a relative of the count, who had lately died in reduced circumstances, bequeathing this only child to his protection. I had heard much of her beauty from Filippo, but my fancy had become so engrossed by one idea of beauty, as not to admit of any other. We were in the central saloon of the villa when she arrived. She was still in mourning, and approached, leaning on the count's arm. As they ascended the marble portico, I was struck by the elegance of her figure and movement, by the grace with which the *mezzaro*, the bewitching veil of Genoa, was folded about her slender form. They entered. Heavens! what was my surprise when I beheld Bianca before me! It was herself; pale with grief, but still more matured in loveliness than when I had last beheld her. The time that had elapsed had developed the graces of her person, and the sorrow she had undergone had diffused over her countenance an irresistible tenderness.

She blushed and trembled at seeing me, and tears rushed into her eyes, for she remembered in whose company she had been accustomed to behold me. For my part, I cannot express what were my emotions. By degrees I overcame the extreme shyness that had for-

merly paralyzed me in her presence. We were drawn together by sympathy of situation. We had each lost our best friend in the world; we were each, in some measure, thrown upon the kindness of others. When I came to know her intellectually, all my ideal picturings of her were confirmed. Her newness to the world, her delightful susceptibility to everything beautiful and agreeable in nature, reminded me of my own emotions when first I escaped from the convent. Her rectitude of thinking delighted my judgment; the sweetness of her nature wrapped itself round my heart; and then her young, and tender, and budding loveliness, sent a delicious madness to my brain.

I gazed upon her with a kind of idolatry, as something more than mortal; and I felt humiliated at the idea of my comparative unworthiness. Yet she was mortal; and one of mortality's most susceptible and loving compounds;—for she loved me!

How first I discovered the transporting truth I cannot recollect. I believe it stole upon me by degrees as a wonder past hope or belief. We were both at such a tender and loving age; in constant intercourse with each other; mingling in the same elegant pursuits,—for music, poetry, and painting were our mutual delights; and we were almost separated from society among lovely and romantic scenery. Is it strange that two young hearts, thus brought together, should readily twine round each other?

Oh, gods! what a dream—a transient dream of unalloyed delight, then passed over my soul! Then it was that the world around me was indeed a paradise; for I had woman—lovely, delicious woman, to share it with me! How often have I rambled along the picturesque shores of Sestri, or climbed its wild mountains, with the coast gemmed with villas, and the blue sea far below me, and the slender Faro of Genoa on its romantic promontory in the distance; and as I sustained the faltering steps of Bianca, have thought there could no unhappiness enter into so beautiful a world! How often have we listened together to the nightingale, as it poured forth its rich notes among the moonlight bowers of the garden, and have wondered that poets could ever have fancied anything melancholy in its song! Why, oh why is this budding season of life and tenderness so transient! why is this rosy cloud of love, that sheds such a glow over the morning of our days, so prone to brew up into the whirlwind and the storm!

I was the first to awaken from this blissful delirium of the affections. I had gained Bianca's heart, what was I to do with it? I had no wealth nor prospect to entitle me to her hand; was I to take advantage of her ignorance of the world, of her confiding affection, and draw her down to my own poverty? Was this requiting the hospitality of the count? was this requiting the love of Bianca?

Now first I began to feel that even successful love may

have its bitterness. A corroding care gathered about my heart. I moved about the palace like a guilty being. I felt as if I had abused its hospitality, as if I were a thief within its walls. I could no longer look with unembarrassed mien in the countenance of the count. I accused myself of perfidy to him, and I thought he read it in my looks, and began to distrust and despise me. His manner had always been ostentatious and condescending; it now appeared cold and haughty. Filippo, too, became reserved and distant; or at least I suspected him to be so. Heavens! was this the mere coinage of my brain? Was I to become suspicious of all the world? a poor, surmising wretch; watching looks and gestures; and torturing myself with misconstructions? Or, if true, was I to remain beneath a roof where I was merely tolerated, and linger there on sufferance? "This is not to be endured!" exclaimed I: "I will tear myself from this state of self-abasement—I will break through this fascination and fly—Fly!—Whither? from the world? for where is the world when I leave Bianca behind me?"

My spirit was naturally proud, and swelled within me at the idea of being looked upon with contumely. Many times I was on the point of declaring my family and rank, and asserting my equality in the presence of Bianca, when I thought her relations assumed an air of superiority. But the feeling was transient. I considered myself discarded and condemned by my family;

and had solemnly vowed never to own relationship to them until they themselves should claim it.

The struggle of my mind preyed upon my happiness and my health. It seemed as if the uncertainty of being loved would be less intolerable than thus to be assured of it, and yet not dare to enjoy the conviction. I was no longer the enraptured admirer of Bianca; I no longer hung in ecstasy on the tones of her voice, nor drank in with insatiate gaze the beauty of her countenance. Her very smiles ceased to delight me, for I felt culpable in having won them.

She could not but be sensible of the change in me, and inquired the cause with her usual frankness and simplicity. I could not evade the inquiry, for my heart was full to aching. I told her all the conflict of my soul; my devouring passion, my bitter self-upbraiding. "Yes," said I, "I am unworthy of you. I am an offcast from my family—a wanderer—a nameless, homeless wanderer—with nothing but poverty for my portion; and yet I have dared to love you—have dared to aspire to your love."

My agitation moved her to tears, but she saw nothing in my situation so hopeless as I had depicted it. Brought up in a convent, she knew nothing of the world—its wants—its cares: and indeed what woman is a worldly casuist in the matters of the heart? Nay, more, she kindled into sweet enthusiasm when she spoke of my fortunes and myself. We had dwelt together on the

works of the famous masters. I related to her their histories; the high reputation, the influence, the magnificence to which they had attained. The companions of princes, the favorites of kings, the pride and boast of nations. All this she applied to me. Her love saw nothing in all their great productions that I was not able to achieve; and when I beheld the lovely creature glow with fervor, and her whole countenance radiant with visions of my glory, I was snatched up for the moment into the heaven of her own imagination.

I am dwelling too long upon this part of my story; yet I cannot help lingering over a period of my life on which, with all its cares and conflicts, I look back with fondness, for as yet my soul was unstained by a crime. I do not know what might have been the result of this struggle between pride, delicacy, and passion, had I not read in a Neapolitan gazette an account of the sudden death of my brother. It was accompanied by an earnest inquiry for intelligence concerning me, and a prayer, should this meet my eye, that I would hasten to Naples to comfort an infirm and afflicted father.

I was naturally of an affectionate disposition, but my brother had never been as a brother to me. I had long considered myself as disconnected from him, and his death caused me but little emotion. The thoughts of my father, infirm and suffering, touched me, however, to the quick; and when I thought of him, that lofty, magnificent being, now bowed down and desolate, and suing to me for

comfort, all my resentment for past neglect was subdued, and a glow of filial affection was awakened within me.

The predominant feeling, however, that overpowered all others, was transport at the sudden change in my whole fortunes. A home; a name, rank, wealth, awaited me; and love painted a still more rapturous prospect in the distance. I hastened to Bianca, and threw myself at her feet. "Oh, Bianca!" exclaimed I, "at length I can claim you for my own. I am no longer a nameless adventurer, a neglected, rejected outcast. Look—read—behold the tidings that restore me to my name and to myself!"

I will not dwell on the scene that ensued. Bianca rejoiced in the reverse of my situation, because she saw it lightened my heart of a load of care; for her own part, she had loved me for myself, and had never doubted that my own merits would command both fame and fortune.

I now felt all my native pride buoyant within me. I no longer walked with my eyes bent to the dust; hope elevated them to the skies—my soul was lit up with fresh fires, and beamed from my countenance.

I wished to impart the change in my circumstances to the count; to let him know who and what I was—and to make formal proposals for the hand of Bianca; but he was absent on a distant estate. I opened my whole soul to Filippo. Now first I told him of my passion, of the doubts and fears that had distracted me, and of the tidings that had suddenly dispelled them. He over-

whelmed me with congratulations, and with the warmest expressions of sympathy; I embraced him in the fulness of my heart;—I felt compunctions for having suspected him of coldness, and asked his forgiveness for ever having doubted his friendship.

Nothing is so warm and enthusiastic as a sudden expansion of the heart between young men. Filippo entered into our concerns with the most eager interest. He was our confidant and counsellor. It was determined that I should hasten at once to Naples, to reëstablish myself in my father's affections, and my paternal home; and the moment the reconciliation was effected, and my father's consent insured, I should return and demand Bianca of the count. Filippo engaged to secure his father's acquiescence; indeed he undertook to watch over our interest, and to be the channel through which we might correspond.

My parting with Bianca was tender—delicious—agonizing. It was in a little pavilion of the garden which had been one of our favorite resorts. How often and often did I return to have one more adieu, to have her look once more on me in speechless emotion; to enjoy once more the rapturous sight of those tears streaming down her lovely cheeks; to seize once more on that delicate hand, the frankly accorded pledge of love, and cover it with tears and kisses? Heavens! there is a delight even in the parting agony of two lovers, worth a thousand tame pleasures of the world. I have her at this moment

before my eyes, at the window of the pavilion, putting aside the vines which clustered about the casement, her form beaming forth in virgin light, her countenance all tears and smiles, sending a thousand and a thousand adieus after me, as hesitating, in a delirium of fondness and agitation, I faltered my way down the avenue.

As the bark bore me out of the harbor of Genoa, how eagerly my eye stretched along the coast of Sestri till it discovered the villa gleaming from among the trees at the foot of the mountain. As long as day lasted I gazed and gazed upon it, till it lessened and lessened to a mere white speck in the distance; and still my intense and fixed gaze discerned it, when all other objects of the coast had blended into indistinct confusion, or were lost in the evening gloom.

On arriving at Naples, I hastened to my paternal home. My heart yearned for the long-withheld blessing of a father's love. As I entered the proud portal of the ancestral palace, my emotions were so great that I could not speak. No one knew me, the servants gazed at me with curiosity and surprise. A few years of intellectual elevation and development had made a prodigious change in the poor fugitive stripling from the convent. Still, that no one should know me in my rightful home was overpowering. I felt like the prodigal son returned. I was a stranger in the house of my father. I burst into tears and wept aloud. When I made myself known, however, all was changed. I, who had once been almost re-

pulsed from its walls, and forced to fly as an exile, was welcomed back with acclamation, with servility. One of the servants hastened to prepare my father for my reception; my eagerness to receive the paternal embrace was so great that I could not await his return, but hurried after him. What a spectacle met my eyes as I entered the chamber! My father, whom I had left in the pride of vigorous age, whose noble and majestic bearing had so awed my young imagination, was bowed down and withered into decrepitude. A paralysis had ravaged his stately form, and left it a shaking ruin. He sat propped up in his chair, with pale, relaxed visage, and glassy, wandering eye. His intellect had evidently shared in the ravages of his frame. The servant was endeavoring to make him comprehend that a visitor was at hand. I tottered up to him, and sank at his feet. All his past coldness and neglect were forgotten in his present sufferings. I remembered only that he was my parent, and that I had deserted him. I clasped his knee: my voice was almost filled with convulsive sobs. "Pardon—pardon! oh! my father!" was all that I could utter. His apprehension seemed slowly to return to him. He gazed at me for some moments with a vague, inquiring look; a convulsive tremor quivered about his lips; he feebly extended a shaking hand; laid it upon my head, and burst into an infantine flow of tears.

From that moment he would scarcely spare me from his sight. I appeared the only object that his heart

responded to in the world; all else was as a blank to him. He had almost lost the power of speech, and the reasoning faculty seemed at an end. He was mute and passive, excepting that fits of childlike weeping would sometimes come over him without any immediate cause. If I left the room at any time, his eye was incessantly fixed on the door till my return, and on my entrance there was another gush of tears.

To talk with him of all my concerns, in this ruined state of mind, would have been worse than useless; to have left him for ever so short a time would have been cruel, unnatural. Here then was a new trial for my affections. I wrote to Bianca an account of my return, and of my actual situation, painting in colors vivid, for they were true, the torments I suffered at our being thus separated; for the youthful lover every day of absence is an age of love lost. I enclosed the letter in one to Filippo, who was the channel of our correspondence. I received a reply from him full of friendship and sympathy; from Bianca, full of assurances of affection and constancy. Week after week, month after month elapsed, without making any change in my circumstances. The vital flame which had seemed nearly extinct when first I met my father, kept fluttering on without any apparent diminution. I watched him constantly, faithfully, I had almost said patiently. I knew that his death alone would set me free—yet I never at any moment wished it. I felt too glad to be able to make any atonement for past

disobedience; and denied, as I had been, all endearments of relationship in my early days, my heart yearned towards a father, who in his age and helplessness had thrown himself entirely on me for comfort.

My passion for Bianca gained daily more force from absence: by constant meditation it wore itself a deeper and deeper channel. I made no new friends nor acquaintances; sought none of the pleasures of Naples, which my rank and fortune threw open to me. Mine was a heart that confined itself to few objects, but dwelt upon them with the intenser passion. To sit by my father, administer to his wants, and to meditate on Bianca in the silence of his chamber, was my constant habit. Sometimes I amused myself with my pencil, in portraying the image ever present to my imagination. I transferred to canvas every look and smile of hers that dwelt in my heart. I showed them to my father, in hopes of awakening an interest in his bosom for the mere shadow of my love; but he was too far sunk in intellect to take any notice of them. When I received a letter from Bianca, it was a new source of solitary luxury. Her letters, it is true, were less and less frequent, but they were always full of assurances of unabated affection. They breathed not the frank and innocent warmth with which she expressed herself in conversation, but I accounted for it from the embarrassment which inexperienced minds have often to express themselves upon paper. Filippo assured me of her unaltered constancy. They both lamented, in the

strongest terms, our continued separation, though they did justice to the filial piety that kept me by my father's side.

Nearly two years elapsed in this protracted exile. To me they were so many ages. Ardent and impetuous by nature, I scarcely know how I should have supported so long an absence, had I not felt assured that the faith of Bianca was equal to my own. At length my father died. Life went from him almost imperceptibly. I hung over him in mute affliction, and watched the expiring spasms of nature. His last faltering accents whispered repeatedly a blessing on me. Alas! how has it been fulfilled!

When I had paid due honors to his remains, and laid them in the tomb of our ancestors, I arranged briefly my affairs, put them in a posture to be easily at my command from a distance, and embarked once more with a bounding heart for Genoa.

Our voyage was propitious, and oh! what was my rapture, when first, in the dawn of morning, I saw the shadowy summits of the Apennines rising almost like clouds above the horizon! The sweet breath of summer just moved us over the long wavering billows that were rolling us on towards Genoa. By degrees the coast of Sestri rose like a creation of enchantment from the silver bosom of the deep. I beheld the line of villages and palaces studding its borders. My eye reverted to a well-known point, and at length, from the confusion of distant objects,

it singled out the villa which contained Bianca. It was a mere speck in the landscape, but glimmering from afar, the polar star of my heart.

Again I gazed at it for a livelong summer's day, but oh! how different the emotions between departure and return. It now kept growing and growing, instead of lessening and lessening on my sight. My heart seemed to dilate with it. I looked at it through a telescope. I gradually defined one feature after another. The balconies of the central saloon where first I met Bianca beneath its roof; the terrace where we so often had passed the delightful summer evenings; the awning which shaded her chamber-window; I almost fancied I saw her form beneath it. Could she but know her lover was in the bark whose white sail now gleamed on the sunny bosom of the sea! My fond impatience increased as we neared the coast; the ship seemed to lag lazily over the billows; I could almost have sprang into the sea, and swam to the desired shore.

The shadows of evening gradually shrouded the scene; but the moon arose in all her fulness and beauty, and shed the tender light so dear to lovers, over the romantic coast of Sestri. My soul was bathed in unutterable tenderness. I anticipated the heavenly evenings I should pass in once more wandering with Bianca by the light of that blessed moon.

It was late at night before we entered the harbor. As early next morning as I could get released from the for-

malities of landing, I threw myself on horseback, and hastened to the villa. As I galloped round the rocky promontory on which stands the Faro, and saw the coast of Sestri opening upon me, a thousand anxieties and doubts suddenly sprang up in my bosom. There is something fearful in returning to those we love, while yet uncertain what ills or changes absence may have effected. The turbulence of my agitation shook my very frame. I spurred my horse to redoubled speed; he was covered with foam when we both arrived panting at the gateway that opened to the grounds around the villa. I left my horse at a cottage, and walked through the grounds, that I might regain tranquillity for the approaching interview. I chid myself for having suffered mere doubts and surmises thus suddenly to overcome me; but I was always prone to be carried away by gusts of the feelings.

On entering the garden, everything bore the same look as when I had left it; and this unchanged aspect of things reassured me. There were the alleys in which I had so often walked with Bianca, as we listened to the song of the nightingale; the same shades under which we had so often sat during the noontide heat. There were the same flowers of which she was so fond; and which appeared still to be under the ministry of her hand. Everything looked and breathed of Bianca; hope and joy flushed in my bosom at every step. I passed a little arbor, in which we had often sat and read together;

—a book and glove lay on the bench;—it was Bianca's glove; it was a volume of the "Metastasio" I had given her. The glove lay in my favorite passage. I clasped them to my heart with rapture. "All is safe!" exclaimed I; "she loves me, she is still my own!"

I bounded lightly along the avenue, down which I had faltered slowly at my departure. I beheld her favorite pavilion, which had witnessed our parting-scene. The window was open, with the same vine clambering about it, precisely as when she waved and wept me an adieu. O how transporting was the contrast in my situation! As I passed near the pavilion, I heard the tones of a female voice: they thrilled through me with an appeal to my heart not to be mistaken. Before I could think, I *felt* they were Bianca's. For an instant I paused, overpowered with agitation. I feared to break so suddenly upon her. I softly ascended the steps of the pavilion. The door was open. I saw Bianca seated at a table; her back was towards me, she was warbling a soft melancholy air, and was occupied in drawing. A glance sufficed to show me that she was copying one of my own paintings. I gazed on her for a moment in a delicious tumult of emotions. She paused in her singing: a heavy sigh, almost a sob, followed. I could no longer contain myself. "Bianca!" exclaimed I, in a half-smothered voice. She started at the sound, brushed back the ringlets that hung clustering about her face, darted a glance at me, uttered a piercing shriek, and would

have fallen to the earth, had I not caught her in my arms.

"Bianca! my own Bianca!" exclaimed I, folding her to my bosom, my voice stifled in sobs of convulsive joy. She lay in my arms without sense or motion. Alarmed at the effects of my precipitation, I scarce knew what to do. I tried by a thousand endearing words to call her back to consciousness. She slowly recovered, and half opened her eyes.—"Where am I?" murmured she faintly. "Here!" exclaimed I, pressing her to my bosom, "here—close to the heart that adores you—in the arms of your faithful Ottavio!" "Oh no! no! no!" shrieked she, starting into sudden life and terror,—"away! away! leave me! leave me!"

She tore herself from my arms; rushed to a corner of the saloon, and covered her face with her hands, as if the very sight of me were baleful. I was thunderstruck. I could not believe my senses. I followed her, trembling—confounded. I endeavored to take her hand; but she shrunk from my very touch with horror.

"Good heavens, Bianca!" exclaimed I, "what is the meaning of this? Is this my reception after so long an absence? Is this the love you professed for me?"

At the mention of love, a shuddering ran through her. She turned to me a face wild with anguish: "No more of that—no more of that!" gasped she: "talk not to me of love—I—I—am married!"

I reeled as if I had received a mortal blow—a sickness

struck to my very heart. I caught at a window-frame for support. For a moment or two everything was chaos around me. When I recovered, I beheld Bianca lying on a sofa, her face buried in the pillow, and sobbing convulsively. Indignation for her fickleness for a moment overpowered every other feeling.

"Faithless! perjured!" cried I, striding across the room. But another glance at that beautiful being in distress checked all my wrath. Anger could not dwell together with her idea in my soul.

"Oh! Bianca," exclaimed I, in anguish, "could I have dreamt of this? Could I have suspected you would have been false to me?"

She raised her face all streaming with tears, all disordered with emotion, and gave me one appealing look. "False to you?—They told me you were dead!"

"What," said I, "in spite of our constant correspondence?"

She gazed wildly at me: "Correspondence? what correspondence!"

"Have you not repeatedly received and replied to my letters?"

She clasped her hands with solemnity and fervor. "As I hope for mercy—never!"

A horrible surmise shot through my brain. "Who told you I was dead?"

"It was reported that the ship in which you embarked for Naples perished at sea."

"But who told you the report?"

She paused for an instant, and trembled;—"Filippo!"

"May the God of heaven curse him!" cried I, extending my clinched fists aloft.

"Oh do not curse him, do not curse him!" exclaimed she, "he is—he is—my husband!"

This was all that was wanting to unfold the perfidy that had been practised upon me. My blood boiled like liquid fire in my veins. I gasped with rage too great for utterance—I remained for a time bewildered by the whirl of horrible thoughts that rushed through my mind. The poor victim of deception before me thought it was with her I was incensed. She faintly murmured forth her exculpation. I will not dwell upon it. I saw in it more than she meant to reveal. I saw with a glance how both of us had been betrayed.

"'Tis well," muttered I to myself in smothered accents of concentrated fury. "He shall render an account of all this."

Bianca overheard me. New terror flashed in her countenance. "For mercy's sake, do not meet him!—say nothing of what has passed—for my sake say nothing to him—I only shall be the sufferer!"

A new suspicion darted across my mind.—"What!" exclaimed I, "do you then *fear* him? is he *unkind* to you? Tell me," reiterated I, grasping her hand, and looking her eagerly in the face, "tell me—*dares* he to use you harshly?"

"No! no! no!" cried she, faltering and embarrassed; but the glance at her face had told volumes. I saw in her pallid and wasted features, in the prompt terror and subdued agony of her eye, a whole history of a mind broken down by tyranny. Great God! and was this beauteous flower snatched from me to be thus trampled upon? The idea roused me to madness. I clinched my teeth and hands; I foamed at the mouth; every passion seemed to have resolved itself into the fury that like a lava boiled within my heart. Bianca shrunk from me in speechless affright. As I strode by the window, my eye darted down the alley. Fatal moment! I beheld Filippo at a distance! my brain was in delirium—I sprang from the pavilion, and was before him with the quickness of lightning. He saw me as I came rushing upon him—he turned pale, looked wildly to right and left, as if he would have fled, and trembling, drew his sword.

"Wretch!" cried I, "well may you draw your weapon!"

I spoke not another word—I snatched forth a stiletto, put by the sword which trembled in his hand, and buried my poniard in his bosom. He fell with the blow, but my rage was unsated. I sprang upon him with the bloodthirsty feeling of a tiger; redoubled my blows; mangled him in my frenzy, grasped him by the throat, until, with reiterated wounds and strangling convulsions, he expired in my grasp. I remained glaring on the countenance, horrible in death, that seemed to stare back with its pro-

truded eyes upon me. Piercing shrieks roused me from my delirium. I looked round and beheld Bianca flying distractedly towards us. My brain whirled—I waited not to meet her; but fled from the scene of horror. I fled forth from the garden like another Cain,—a hell within my bosom, and a curse upon my head. I fled without knowing whither, almost without knowing why. My only idea was to get farther and farther from the horrors I had left behind; as if I could throw space between myself and my conscience. I fled to the Apennines, and wandered for days and days among their savage heights. How I existed, I cannot tell; what rocks and precipices I braved, and how I braved them, I know not. I kept on and on, trying to out-travel the curse that clung to me. Alas! the shrieks of Bianca rung forever in my ears. The horrible countenance of my victim was forever before my eyes. The blood of Filippo cried to me from the ground. Rocks, trees, and torrents, all resounded with my crime. Then it was I felt how much more insupportable is the anguish of remorse than every other mental pang. Oh! could I but have cast off this crime that festered in my heart—could I but have regained the innocence that reigned in my breast as I entered the garden at Sestri—could I have but restored my victim to life, I felt as if I could look on with transport, even though Bianca were in his arms.

By degrees this frenzied fever of remorse settled into a permanent malady of the mind—into one of the most

horrible that ever poor wretch was cursed with. Wherever I went, the countenance of him I had slain appeared to follow me. Whenever I turned my head, I beheld it behind me, hideous with the contortions of the dying moment. I have tried in every way to escape from this horrible phantom, but in vain. I know not whether it be an illusion of the mind, the consequence of my dismal education at the convent, or whether a phantom really sent by Heaven to punish me, but there it ever is—at all times—in all places. Nor has time nor habit had any effect in familiarizing me with its terrors. I have travelled from place to place—plunged into amusements—tried dissipation and distraction of every kind—all—all in vain. I once had recourse to my pencil, as a desperate experiment. I painted an exact resemblance of this phantom-face. I placed it before me, in hopes that by constantly contemplating the copy, I might diminish the effect of the original. But I only doubled instead of diminishing the misery. Such is the curse that has clung to my footsteps—that has made my life a burden, but the thought of death terrible. God knows what I have suffered—what days and days, and nights and nights of sleepless torment—what a never-dying worm has preyed upon my heart—what an unquenchable fire has burned within my brain! He knows the wrongs that wrought upon my poor weak nature; that converted the tenderest of affections into the deadliest of fury. He knows best whether a frail erring creature has expiated

by long-enduring torture and measureless remorse the crime of a moment of madness. Often, often have I prostrated myself in the dust, and implored that he would give me a sign of his forgiveness, and let me die——

Thus far had I written some time since. I had meant to leave this record of misery and crime with you, to be read when I should be no more.

My prayer to Heaven has at length been heard. You were witness to my emotions last evening at the church, when the vaulted temple resounded with the words of atonement and redemption. I heard a voice speaking to me from the midst of the music; I heard it rising above the pealing of the organ and the voices of the choir—it spoke to me in tones of celestial melody—it promised mercy and forgiveness, but demanded from me full expiation. I go to make it. To-morrow I shall be on my way to Genoa, to surrender myself to justice. You who have pitied my sufferings, who have poured the balm of sympathy into my wounds, do not shrink from my memory with abhorrence now that you know my story. Recollect, that when you read of my crime I shall have atoned for it with my blood!

When the Baronet had finished, there was a universal desire expressed to see the painting of this frightful visage. After much entreaty the Baronet consented, on condition that they should only visit it one by one. He

called his housekeeper, and gave her charge to conduct the gentlemen, singly, to the chamber. They all returned varying in their stories: some affected in one way, some in another; some more, some less; but all agreeing that there was a certain something about the painting that had a very odd effect upon the feelings.

I stood in a deep bow-window with the Baronet, and could not help expressing my wonder. "After all," said I, "there are certain mysteries in our nature, certain inscrutable impulses and influences, which warrant one in being superstitious. Who can account for so many persons of different characters being thus strangely affected by a mere painting?"

"And especially when not one of them has seen it!" said the Baronet, with a smile.

"How!" exclaimed I, "not seen it?"

"Not one of them!" replied he, laying his finger on his lips, in sign of secrecy. "I saw that some of them were in a bantering vein, and did not choose that the memento of the poor Italian should be made a jest of. So I gave the housekeeper a hint to show them all to a different chamber!"

Thus end the stories of the Nervous Gentleman.

PART SECOND.

BUCKTHORNE AND HIS FRIENDS.

This world is the best that we live in,
To lend, or to spend, or to give in;
But to beg, or to borrow, or get a man's own,
'Tis the very worst world, sir, that ever was known.

Lines from an Inn Window.

LITERARY LIFE.

AMONG other subjects of a traveller's curiosity, I had at one time a great craving after anecdotes of literary life; and being at London, one of the most noted places for the production of books, I was excessively anxious to know something of the animals which produced them. Chance fortunately threw me in the way of a literary man by the name of Buckthorne, an eccentric personage, who had lived much in the metropolis, and could give me the natural history of every odd animal to be met with in that wilderness of men. He readily imparted to me some useful hints upon the subject of my inquiry.

"The literary world," said he, "is made up of little confederacies, each looking upon its own members as the lights of the universe; and considering all others as mere transient meteors, doomed soon to fall and be forgotten, while its own luminaries are to shine steadily on to immortality."

"And pray," said I, "how is a man to get a peep into those confederacies you speak of? I presume an intercourse with authors is a kind of intellectual exchange, where one must bring his commodities to barter, and always give a *quid pro quo*."

"Pooh, pooh! how you mistake," said Buckthorne, smiling; "you must never think to become popular among wits by shining. They go into society to shine themselves, not to admire the brilliancy of others. I once thought as you do, and never went into literary society without studying my part beforehand; the consequence was, that I soon got the name of an intolerable proser, and should in a little while have been completely excommunicated, had I not changed my plan of operations. No, sir, no character succeeds so well among wits as that of a good listener; or if ever you are eloquent, let it be when tête-à-tête with an author, and then in praise of his own works, or, what is nearly as acceptable, in disparagement of the works of his contemporaries. If ever he speaks favorably of the productions of a particular friend, dissent boldly from him; pronounce his friend to be a blockhead; never fear his being vexed. Much as people speak of the irritability of authors, I never found one to take offence at such contradictions. No, no, sir, authors are particularly candid in admitting the faults of their friends.

"Indeed, I would advise you to be exceedingly sparing of remarks on all modern works, except to make sarcastic observations on the most distinguished writers of the day."

"Faith," said I, "I'll praise none that have not been dead for at least half a century."

"Even then," observed Mr. Buckthorne, "I would

advise you to be rather cautious; for you must know that many old writers have been enlisted under the banners of different sects, and their merits have become as completely topics of party discussion as the merits of living statesmen and politicians. Nay, there have been whole periods of literature absolutely taboo'd, to use a South Sea phrase. It is, for example, as much as a man's critical reputation is worth in some circles, to say a word in praise of any of the writers of the reign of Charles the Second, or even of Queen Anne, they being all declared Frenchmen in disguise."

"And pray," said I, "when am I then to know that I am on safe grounds, being totally unacquainted with the literary landmarks, and the boundary-line of fashionable taste?"

"Oh!" replied he, "there is fortunately one tract of literature which forms a kind of neutral ground, on which all the literary meet amicably, and run riot in the excess of their good-humor; and this is in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. Here you may praise away at random. Here it is 'cut and come again;' and the more obscure the author, and the more quaint and crabbed his style, the more your admiration will smack of the real relish of the connoisseur; whose taste, like that of an epicure, is always for game that has an antiquated flavor.

"But," continued he, "as you seem anxious to know something of literary society, I will take an opportunity to introduce you to some coterie, where the talents of the

day are assembled. I cannot promise you, however, that they will all be of the first order. Somehow or other, our great geniuses are not gregarious; they do not go in flocks, but fly singly in general society. They prefer mingling like common men with the multitude, and are apt to carry nothing of the author about them but the reputation. It is only the inferior orders that herd together, acquire strength and importance by their confederacies, and bear all the distinctive characteristics of their species."

A LITERARY DINNER.

A FEW days after this conversation with Mr. Buckthorne, he called upon me, and took me with him to a regular literary dinner. It was given by a great bookseller, or rather a company of booksellers, whose firm surpassed in length that of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego.

I was surprised to find between twenty and thirty guests assembled, most of whom I had never seen before. Mr. Buckthorne explained this to me, by informing me that this was a business-dinner, or kind of field-day which the house gave about twice a year to its authors. It is true they did occasionally give snug dinners to three or four literary men at a time; but then these were generally select authors, favorites of the public, such as had arrived at their sixth or seventh editions. "There are," said he, "certain geographical boundaries in the land of literature, and you may judge tolerably well of an author's popularity by the wine his bookseller gives him. An author crosses the port line about the third edition, and gets into claret; and when he has reached the sixth or seventh, he may revel in champagne and burgundy."

"And pray," said I, "how far may these gentlemen have reached that I see around me? are any of these claret-drinkers?"

"Not exactly, not exactly. You find at these great dinners the common steady run of authors, one or two edition men; or if any others are invited, they are aware that it is a kind of republican meeting,—you understand me—a meeting of the republic of letters; and that they must expect nothing but plain, substantial fare."

These hints enabled me to comprehend more fully the arrangement of the table. The two ends were occupied by two partners of the house; and the host seemed to have adopted Addison's idea as to the literary precedence of his guests. A popular poet had the post of honor; opposite to whom was a hot-pressed traveller in quarto with plates. A grave-looking antiquarian, who had produced several solid works, that were much quoted and little read, was treated with great respect, and seated next to a neat, dressy gentleman in black, who had written a thin, genteel, hot-pressed octavo on political economy, that was getting into fashion. Several three-volumed duodecimo men, of fair currency, were placed about the centre of the table; while the lower end was taken up with small poets, translators, and authors who had not as yet risen into much notoriety.

The conversation during dinner was by fits and starts; breaking out here and there in various parts of the table in small flashes, and ending in smoke. The poet, who

had the confidence of a man on good terms with the world, and independent of his bookseller, was very gay and brilliant, and said many clever things which set the partner next him in a roar, and delighted all the company. The other partner, however, maintained his sedateness, and kept carving on, with the air of a thorough man of business, intent upon the occupation of the moment. His gravity was explained to me by my friend Buckthorne. He informed me that the concerns of the house were admirably distributed among the partners. "Thus, for instance," said he, "the grave gentleman is the carving partner, who attends to the joints; and the other is the laughing partner, who attends to the jokes."

The general conversation was chiefly carried on at the upper end of the table, as the authors there seemed to possess the greatest courage of the tongue. As to the crew at the lower end, if they did not make much figure in talking, they did in eating. Never was there a more determined, inveterate, thoroughly sustained attack on the trencher than by this phalanx of masticators. When the cloth was removed, and the wine began to circulate, they grew very merry and jocose among themselves. Their jokes, however, if by chance any of them reached the upper end of the table, seldom produced much effect. Even the laughing partner did not think it necessary to honor them with a smile; which my neighbor Buckthorne accounted for, by informing me that there was a

certain degree of popularity to be obtained before a bookseller could afford to laugh at an author's jokes.

Among this crew of questionable gentlemen thus seated below the salt, my eye singled out one in particular. He was rather shabbily dressed; though he had evidently made the most of a rusty black coat, and wore his shirt-frill plaited and puffed out voluminously at the bosom. His face was dusky, but florid, perhaps a little too florid, particularly about the nose; though the rosy hue gave the greater lustre to a twinkling black eye. He had a little the look of a boon companion, with that dash of the poor devil in it which gives an inexpressible mellow tone to a man's humor. I had seldom seen a face of richer promise; but never was promise so ill kept. He said nothing, ate and drank with the keen appetite of a garreteer, and scarcely stopped to laugh, even at the good jokes from the upper end of the table. I inquired who he was. Buckthorne looked at him attentively: "Gad," said he, "I have seen that face before, but where I cannot recollect. He cannot be an author of any note. I suppose some writer of sermons, or grinder of foreign travels."

After dinner we retired to another room to take tea and coffee, where we were reinforced by a cloud of inferior guests,—authors of small volumes in boards, and pamphlets stitched in blue paper. These had not as yet arrived to the importance of a dinner-invitation, but were invited occasionally to pass the evening in a

friendly way. They were very respectful to the partners, and, indeed, seemed to stand a little in awe of them; but they paid devoted court to the lady of the house, and were extravagantly fond of the children. Some few, who did not feel confidence enough to make such advances, stood shyly off in corners, talking to one another; or turned over portfolios of prints which they had not seen above five thousand times, or moused over the music on the forte-piano.

The poet and the thin octavo gentleman were the persons most current and at their ease in the drawing-room; being men evidently of circulation in the West End. They got on each side of the lady of the house, and paid her a thousand compliments and civilities, at some of which I thought she would have expired with delight. Everything they said and did had the odor of fashionable life. I looked round in vain for the poor-devil author in the rusty black coat; he had disappeared immediately after leaving the table, having a dread, no doubt, of the glaring light of a drawing-room. Finding nothing further to interest my attention, I took my departure soon after coffee had been served, leaving the poet, and the thin, genteel, hot-pressed octavo gentleman, masters of the field.

THE CLUB OF QUEER FELLOWS.

THINK it was the very next evening that, in coming out of Covent Garden Theatre with my eccentric friend Buckthorne, he proposed to give me another peep at life and character. Finding me willing for any research of the kind, he took me through a variety of the narrow courts and lanes about Covent Garden, until we stopped before a tavern, from which we heard the bursts of merriment of a jovial party. There would be a loud peal of laughter, then an interval, then another peal, as if a prime wag were telling a story. After a little while there was a song, and at the close of each stanza a hearty roar, and a vehement thumping on the table.

"This is the place," whispered Buckthorne; "it is the club of queer fellows, a great resort of the small wits, third-rate actors, and newspaper critics of the theatres. Any one can go in on paying a sixpence at the bar for the use of the club."

We entered, therefore, without ceremony, and took our seats at a lone table, in a dusky corner of the room. The club was assembled round a table, on which stood bever-

ages of various kinds, according to the tastes of the individuals. The members were a set of queer fellows indeed; but what was my surprise on recognizing, in the prime wit of the meeting, the poor-devil author whom I had remarked at the booksellers' dinner for his promising face and his complete taciturnity. Matters, however, were entirely changed with him. There he was a mere cipher; here he was lord of the ascendant, the choice spirit, the dominant genius. He sat at the head of the table with his hat on, and an eye beaming even more luminously than his nose. He had a quip and a fillip for every one, and a good thing on every occasion. Nothing could be said or done without eliciting a spark from him: and I solemnly declare I have heard much worse wit even from noblemen. His jokes, it must be confessed, were rather wet, but they suited the circle over which he presided. The company were in that maudlin mood, when a little wit goes a great way. Every time he opened his lips there was sure to be a roar; and even sometimes before he had time to speak.

We were fortunate enough to enter in time for a glee composed by him expressly for the club, and which he sung with two boon companions, who would have been worthy subjects for Hogarth's pencil. As they were each provided with a written copy, I was enabled to procure the reading of it.

"Merrily, merrily push round the glass,
And merrily troll the glee,

For he who won't drink till he wink, is an ass,
So, neighbor, I drink to thee.

"Merrily, merrily fuddle thy nose,
Until it right rosy shall be;
For a jolly red nose, I speak under the rose,
Is a sign of good company."

We waited until the party broke up, and no one but the wit remained. He sat at the table with his legs stretched under it, and wide apart; his hands in his breeches-pockets; his head drooped upon his breast; and gazing with lack-lustre countenance on an empty tankard. His gayety was gone, his fire completely quenched.

My companion approached, and startled him from his fit of brown study, introducing himself on the strength of their having dined together at the booksellers'.

"By the way," said he, "it seems to me I have seen you before; your face is surely that of an old acquaintance, though for the life of me I cannot tell where I have known you."

"Very likely," replied he, with a smile; "many of my old friends have forgotten me. Though, to tell the truth, my memory in this instance is as bad as your own. If, however, it will assist your recollection in any way, my name is Thomas Dribble, at your service."

"What! Tom Dribble, who was at old Birchell's school in Warwickshire?"

"The same," said the other, coolly.

"Why, then, we are old schoolmates, though it's no wonder you don't recollect me. I was your junior by several years; don't you recollect little Jack Buckthorne?"

Here there ensued a scene of school-fellow recognition, and a world of talk about old school-times and school-pranks. Mr. Dribble ended by observing, with a heavy sigh, "that times were sadly changed since those days."

"Faith, Mr. Dribble," said I, "you seem quite a different man here from what you were at dinner. I had no idea that you had so much stuff in you. There you were all silence, but here you absolutely keep the table in a roar."

"Ah! my dear sir," replied he, with a shake of the head, and a shrug of the shoulder, "I am a mere glow-worm. I never shine by daylight. Besides, it's a hard thing for a poor devil of an author to shine at the table of a rich bookseller. Who do you think would laugh at anything I could say, when I had some of the current wits of the day about me? But here, though a poor devil, I am among still poorer devils than myself; men who look up to me as a man of letters, and a bel-esprit, and all my jokes pass as sterling gold from the mint.

"You surely do yourself injustice, sir," said I; "I have certainly heard more good things from you this evening, than from any of those beaux-esprits by whom you appear to have been so daunted."

"Ah, sir! but they have luck on their side; they are

in the fashion—there's nothing like being in fashion. A man that has once got his character up for a wit is always sure of a laugh, say what he may. He may utter as much nonsense as he pleases, and all will pass current. No one stops to question the coin of a rich man; but a poor devil cannot pass off either a joke or a guinea, without its being examined on both sides. Wit and coin are always doubted with a threadbare coat.

"For my part," continued he, giving his hat a twitch a little more on one side,—"for my part, I hate your fine dinners; there's nothing, sir, like the freedom of a chop-house. I'd rather, any time, have my steak and tankard among my own set, than drink claret and eat venison with your cursed civil, elegant company, who never laugh at a good joke from a poor devil for fear of its being vulgar. A good joke grows in a wet soil; it flourishes in low places, but withers on your d—d high, dry grounds. I once kept high company, sir, until I nearly ruined myself; I grew so dull, and vapid, and genteel. Nothing saved me but being arrested by my landlady, and thrown into prison; where a course of catch-clubs, eightpenny ale, and poor-devil company, manured my mind, and brought it back to itself again."

As it was now growing late, we parted for the evening, though I felt anxious to know more of this practical philosopher. I was glad, therefore, when Buckthorne proposed to have another meeting, to talk over old school-times, and inquired his schoolmate's address. The latter

seemed at first a little shy of naming his lodgings; but suddenly, assuming an air of hardihood—"Green-arbor Court, sir," exclaimed he—"Number —— in Green-arbor Court. You must know the place. Classic ground, sir, classic ground! It was there Goldsmith wrote his 'Vicar of Wakefield,'—I always like to live in literary haunts."

I was amused with this whimsical apology for shabby quarters. On our way homeward, Buckthorne assured me that this Dribble had been the prime wit and great wag of the school in their boyish days, and one of those unlucky urchins denominated bright geniuses. As he perceived me curious respecting his old schoolmate, he promised to take me with him in his proposed visit to Green-arbor Court.

A few mornings afterward he called upon me, and we set forth on our expedition. He led me through a variety of singular alleys, and courts, and blind passages; for he appeared to be perfectly versed in all the intricate geography of the metropolis. At length we came out upon Fleet Market, and traversing it, turned up a narrow street to the bottom of a long steep flight of stone steps, called Break-neck Stairs. These, he told me, led up to Green-arbor Court, and that down them poor Goldsmith might many a time have risked his neck. When we entered the court, I could not but smile to think in what out-of-the-way corners genius produces her bantlings! And the muses, those capricious dames, who, forsooth,

so often refuse to visit palaces, and deny a single smile to votaries in splendid studies, and gilded drawing-rooms,—what holes and burrows will they frequent to lavish their favors on some ragged disciple!

This Green-arbor Court I found to be a small square, surrounded by tall and miserable houses, the very intestines of which seemed turned inside out, to judge from the old garments and frippery fluttering from every window. It appeared to be a region of washerwomen, and lines were stretched about the little square, on which clothes were dangling to dry.

Just as we entered the square, a scuffle took place between two viragoes about a disputed right to a wash-tub, and immediately the whole community was in a hub-bub. Heads in mob-caps popped out of every window, and such a clamor of tongues ensued, that I was fain to stop my ears. Every amazon took part with one or other of the disputants, and brandished her arms, dripping with soap-suds, and fired away from her window as from the embrazure of a fortress; while the swarms of children nestled and cradled in every procreant chamber of this hive, waking with the noise, set up their shrill pipes to swell the general concert.

Poor Goldsmith! what a time he must have had of it, with his quiet disposition and nervous habits, penned up in this den of noise and vulgarity! How strange, that, while every sight and sound was sufficient to embitter the heart, and fill it with misanthropy, his pen should be

dropping the honey of Hybla! Yet it is more than probable that he drew many of his inimitable pictures of low life from the scenes which surrounded him in this abode. The circumstance of Mrs. Tibbs being obliged to wash her husband's two shirts in a neighbor's house, who refused to lend her wash-tub, may have been no sport of fancy, but a fact passing under his own eye. His landlady may have sat for the picture, and Beau Tibbs's scanty wardrobe have been a *fac-simile* of his own.

It was with some difficulty that we found our way to Dribble's lodgings. They were up two pair of stairs, in a room that looked upon the court; and when we entered, he was seated on the edge of his bed, writing at a broken table. He received us, however, with a free, open, poor-devil air, that was irresistible. It is true he did at first appear slightly confused; buttoned up his waistcoat a little higher, and tucked in a stray frill of linen. But he recollected himself in an instant; gave a half swagger, half leer, as he stepped forth to receive us; drew a three-legged stool for Mr. Buckthorne; pointed me to a lumbering old damask chair, that looked like a dethroned monarch in exile; and bade us welcome to his garret.

We soon got engaged in conversation. Buckthorne and he had much to say about early school-scenes; and as nothing opens a man's heart more than recollections of the kind, we soon drew from him a brief outline of his literary career.

THE POOR-DEVIL AUTHOR.

I BEGAN life unluckily by being the wag and bright fellow at school; and I had the further misfortune of becoming the great genius of my native village. My father was a country attorney, and intended I should succeed him in business; but I had too much genius to study, and he was too fond of my genius to force it into the traces; so I fell into bad company, and took to bad habits. Do not mistake me. I mean that I fell into the company of village-literati, and village-blues, and took to writing village-poetry.

It was quite the fashion in the village to be literary. There was a little knot of choice spirits of us, who assembled frequently together, formed ourselves into a Literary, Scientific, and Philosophical Society, and fancied ourselves the most learned Philos in existence. Every one had a great character assigned him, suggested by some casual habit or affectation. One heavy fellow drank an enormous quantity of tea, rolled in his arm-chair, talked sententiously, pronounced dogmatically, and was considered a second Dr. Johnson; another, who happened to be a curate, uttered coarse jokes, wrote

doggerel rhymes, and was the Swift of our association. Thus we had also our Popes, and Goldsmiths, and Addisons; and a blue-stocking lady, whose drawing-room we frequented, who corresponded about nothing with all the world, and wrote letters with the stiffness and formality of a printed book, was cried up as another Mrs. Montagu. I was, by common consent, the juvenile prodigy, the poetical youth, the great genius, the pride and hope of the village, through whom it was to become one day as celebrated as Stratford-on-Avon.

My father died, and left me his blessing and his business. His blessing brought no money into my pocket; and as to his business, it soon deserted me; for I was busy writing poetry, and could not attend to law, and my clients, though they had great respect for my talents, had no faith in a poetical attorney.

I lost my business, therefore, spent my money, and finished my poem. It was the Pleasures of Melancholy, and was cried up to the skies by the whole circle. The Pleasures of Imagination, the Pleasures of Hope, and the Pleasures of Memory, though each had placed its author in the first rank of poets, were blank prose in comparison. Our Mrs. Montagu would cry over it from beginning to end. It was pronounced by all the members of the Literary, Scientific, and Philosophical Society the greatest poem of the age, and all anticipated the noise it would make in the great world. There was not a doubt but the London booksellers would be mad

after it; and the only fear of my friends was, that I would make a sacrifice by selling it too cheap. Every time they talked the matter over, they increased the price. They reckoned up the great sums given for the poems of certain popular writers, and determined that mine was worth more than all put together, and ought to be paid for accordingly. For my part, I was modest in my expectations, and determined that I would be satisfied with a thousand guineas. So I put my poem in my pocket, and set off for London.

My journey was joyous. My heart was light as my purse, and my head full of anticipations of fame and fortune. With what swelling pride did I cast my eyes upon old London from the heights of Highgate! I was like a general, looking down upon a place he expects to conquer. The great metropolis lay stretched before me, buried under a home-made cloud of murky smoke, that wrapped it from the brightness of a sunny day, and formed for it a kind of artificial bad weather. At the outskirts of the city, away to the west, the smoke gradually decreased until all was clear and sunny, and the view stretched uninterrupted to the blue line of the Kentish hills.

My eye turned fondly to where the mighty cupola of St. Paul's swelled dimly through this misty chaos, and I pictured to myself the solemn realm of learning that lies about its base. How soon should the Pleasures of Melancholy throw this world of booksellers and printers

into a bustle of business and delight! How soon should I hear my name repeated by printers' devils throughout Paternoster Row, and Angel Court, and Ave Maria Lane, until Amen Corner should echo back the sound!

Arrived in town, I repaired at once to the most fashionable publisher. Every new author patronizes him of course. In fact, it had been determined in the village circle that he should be the fortunate man. I cannot tell you how vain-gloriously I walked the streets. My head was in the clouds. I felt the airs of heaven playing about it, and fancied it already encircled by a halo of literary glory. As I passed by the windows of bookshops, I anticipated the time when my work would be shining among the hot-pressed wonders of the day; and my face, scratched on copper, or cut on wood, figuring in fellowship with those of Scott, and Byron, and Moore.

When I applied at the publisher's house, there was something in the loftiness of my air, and the dinginess of my dress, that struck the clerks with reverence. They doubtless took me for some person of consequence; probably a digger of Greek roots, or a penetrator of pyramids. A proud man in a dirty shirt is always an imposing character in the world of letters; one must feel intellectually secure before he can venture to dress shabbily; none but a great genius, or a great scholar, dares to be dirty; so I was ushered at once to the sanctum sanctorum of this high-priest of Minerva.

The publishing of books is a very different affair now-

adays from what it was in the time of Bernard Lintot. I found the publisher a fashionably dressed man, in an elegant drawing-room, furnished with sofas, and portraits of celebrated authors, and cases of splendidly bound books. He was writing letters at an elegant table. This was transacting business in style. The place seemed suited to the magnificent publications that issued from it. I rejoiced at the choice I had made of a publisher, for I always liked to encourage men of taste and spirit.

I stepped up to the table with the lofty poetical port I had been accustomed to maintain in our village circle; though I threw in it something of a patronizing air, such as one feels when about to make a man's fortune. The publisher paused with his pen in hand, and seemed waiting in mute suspense to know what was to be announced by so singular an apparition.

I put him at his ease in a moment, for I felt that I had but to come, see, and conquer. I made known my name, and the name of my poem; produced my precious roll of blotted manuscript; laid it on the table with an emphasis; and told him at once, to save time, and come directly to the point, the price was one thousand guineas.

I had given him no time to speak, nor did he seem so inclined. He continued looking at me for a moment with an air of whimsical perplexity; scanned me from head to foot; looked down at the manuscript, then up again at me, then pointed to a chair; and whistling softly to himself, went on writing his letter.

I sat for some time waiting his reply, supposing he was making up his mind; but he only paused occasionally to take a fresh dip of ink, to stroke his chin, or the tip of his nose, and then resumed his writing. It was evident his mind was intently occupied upon some other subject; but I had no idea that any other subject could be attended to, and my poem lie unnoticed on the table. I had supposed that everything would make way for the "Pleasures of Melancholy."

My gorge at length rose within me. I took up my manuscript, thrust it into my pocket, and walked out of the room; making some noise as I went out, to let my departure be heard. The publisher, however, was too much buried in minor concerns to notice it. I was suffered to walk down-stairs without being called back. I sallied forth into the street, but no clerk was sent after me; nor did the publisher call after me from the drawing-room window. I have been told since, that he considered me either a madman or a fool. I leave you to judge how much he was in the wrong in his opinion.

When I turned the corner, my crest fell. I cooled down in my pride and my expectations, and reduced my terms with the next bookseller to whom I applied. I had no better success; nor with a third, nor with a fourth. I then desired the booksellers to make an offer themselves; but the deuce an offer would they make. They told me poetry was a mere drug; everybody wrote poetry; the market was overstocked with it. And then

they said, the title of my poem was not taking; that pleasures of all kinds were worn threadbare, nothing but horrors did nowadays, and even those were almost worn out. Tales of Pirates, Robbers, and bloody Turks, might answer tolerably well; but then they must come from some established, well-known name, or the public would not look at them.

At last I offered to leave my poem with a bookseller to read it, and judge for himself. "Why, really, my dear Mr. —— a—a—I forget your name," said he, casting his eye at my rusty coat and shabby gaiters, "really, sir, we are so pressed with business just now, and have so many manuscripts on hand to read, that we have not time to look at any new productions; but if you can call again in a week or two, or say the middle of next month, we may be able to look over your writings, and give you an answer. Don't forget, the month after next; good morning, sir; happy to see you any time you are passing this way." So saying, he bowed me out in the civilest way imaginable. In short, sir, instead of an eager competition to secure my poem, I could not even get it read! In the meantime I was harassed by letters from my friends, wanting to know when the work was to appear; who was to be my publisher; and above all things, warning me not to let it go too cheap.

There was but one alternative left. I determined to publish the poem myself; and to have my triumph over the booksellers when it should become the fashion of the

day. I accordingly published the "Pleasures of Melancholy,"—and ruined myself. Excepting the copies sent to the reviews, and to my friends in the country, not one, I believe, ever left the bookseller's warehouse. The printer's bill drained my purse; and the only notice that was taken of my work was contained in the advertisements paid for by myself.

I could have borne all this, and have attributed it, as usual, to the mismanagement of the publisher, or the want of taste in the public; and could have made the usual appeal to posterity; but my village friends would not let me rest in quiet. They were picturing me to themselves feasting with the great, communing with the literary, and in the high career of fortune and renown. Every little while, some one would call on me with a letter of introduction from the village circle, recommending him to my attentions, and requesting that I would make him known in society; with a hint, that an introduction to a celebrated literary nobleman would be extremely agreeable. I determined, therefore, to change my lodgings, drop my correspondence, and disappear altogether from the view of my village admirers. Besides, I was anxious to make one more poetic attempt. I was by no means disheartened by the failure of my first. My poem was evidently too didactic. The public was wise enough. It no longer read for instruction. "They want horrors, do they?" said I: "I'faith! then they shall have enough of them." So I looked out for

some quiet, retired place, where I might be out of the reach of my friends, and have leisure to cook up some delectable dish of poetical "hell-broth."

I had some difficulty in finding a place to my mind, when chance threw me in the way of Canonbury Castle. It is an ancient brick tower, hard by "merry Islington"; the remains of a hunting-seat of Queen Elizabeth, where she took the pleasure of the country when the neighborhood was all woodland. What gave it particular interest in my eyes was the circumstance that it had been the residence of a poet.

It was here Goldsmith resided when he wrote his "Deserted Village." I was shown the very apartment. It was a relic of the original style of the castle, with panelled wainscots and Gothic windows. I was pleased with its air of antiquity, and with its having been the residence of poor Goldy.

"Goldsmith was a pretty poet," said I to myself, "a very pretty poet, though rather of the old school. He did not think and feel so strongly as is the fashion nowadays; but had he lived in these times of hot hearts and hot heads, he would no doubt have written quite differently."

In a few days I was quietly established in my new quarters; my books all arranged; my writing-desk placed by a window looking out into the fields; and I felt as snug as Robinson Crusoe, when he had finished his bower. For several days I enjoyed all the novelty of the change and the charms which grace new lodgings, before

one has found out their defects. I rambled about the fields where I fancied Goldsmith had rambled. I explored merry Islington; ate my solitary dinner at the Black Bull, which, according to tradition, was a country-seat of Sir Walter Raleigh; and would sit and sip my wine, and muse on old times, in a quaint old room, where many a council had been held.

All this did very well for a few days. I was stimulated by novelty; inspired by the associations awakened in my mind by these curious haunts; and began to think I felt the spirit of composition stirring within me. But Sunday came, and with it the whole city world, swarming about Canonbury Castle. I could not open my window but I was stunned with shouts and noises from the cricket-ground; the late quiet road beneath my window was alive with the tread of feet and clack of tongues; and, to complete my misery, I found that my quiet retreat was absolutely a "show-house," the tower and its contents being shown to strangers at sixpence a head.

There was a perpetual tramping up-stairs of citizens and their families, to look about the country from the top of the tower, and to take a peep at the city through the telescope, to try if they could discern their own chimneys. And then, in the midst of a vein of thought, or a moment of inspiration, I was interrupted, and all my ideas put to flight, by my intolerable landlady's tapping at the door, and asking me if I would "just please to let a lady and gentleman come in, to take a look at Mr.

Goldsmith's room." If you know anything of what an author's study is, and what an author is himself, you must know that there was no standing this. I put positive interdict on my room's being exhibited; but then it was shown when I was absent, and my papers put in confusion; and, on returning home one day, I absolutely found a cursed tradesman and his daughters gaping over my manuscripts, and my landlady in a panic at my appearance. I tried to make out a little longer, by taking the key in my pocket; but it would not do. I overheard mine hostess one day telling some of her customers on the stairs, that the room was occupied by an author, who was always in a tantrum if interrupted; and I immediately perceived, by a slight noise at the door, that they were peeping at me through the key-hole. By the head of Apollo, but this was quite too much! With all my eagerness for fame, and my ambition of the stare of the million, I had no idea of being exhibited by retail, at sixpence a head, and that through a key-hole. So I bid adieu to Canonbury Castle, merry Islington, and the haunts of poor Goldsmith, without having advanced a single line in my labors.

My next quarters were at a small, whitewashed cottage, which stands not far from Hampstead, just on the brow of a hill; looking over Chalk Farm and Camden Town, remarkable for the rival houses of Mother Red Cap and Mother Black Cap; and so across Crackskull Common to the distant city.

The cottage was in nowise remarkable in itself; but I regarded it with reverence, for it had been the asylum of a persecuted author. Hither poor Steele had retreated, and laid perdu, when persecuted by creditors and bailiffs—those immemorial plagues of authors and free-spirited gentlemen; and here he had written many numbers of the "Spectator." It was hence, too, that he had dispatched those little notes to his lady, so full of affection and whimsicality, in which the fond husband, the careless gentleman, and the shifting spendthrift, were so oddly blended. I thought, as I first eyed the window of his apartment, that I could sit within it and write volumes.

No such thing! It was haymaking season, and, as ill luck would have it, immediately opposite the cottage was a little ale-house, with the sign of the Load of Hay. Whether it was there in Steele's time, I cannot say; but it set all attempts at conception or inspiration at defiance. It was the resort of all the Irish haymakers who mow the broad fields in the neighborhood; and of drovers and teamsters who travel that road. Here they would gather in the endless summer twilight, or by the light of the harvest moon, and sit around a table at the door; and tipple, and laugh, and quarrel, and fight, and sing drowsy songs, and dawdle away the hours, until the deep solemn notes of St. Paul's clock would warn the varlets home.

In the daytime I was less able to write. It was broad

summer. The haymakers were at work in the fields, and the perfume of the new-mown hay brought with it the recollection of my native fields. So instead of remaining in my room to write, I went wandering about Primrose Hill, and Hampstead Heights, and Shepherd's Fields, and all those Arcadian scenes so celebrated by London bards. I cannot tell you how many delicious hours I have passed, lying on the cocks of the new-mown hay, on the pleasant slopes of some of those hills, inhaling the fragrance of the fields, while the summer-fly buzzed about me, or the grasshopper leaped into my bosom; and how I have gazed with half-shut eye upon the smoky mass of London, and listened to the distant sound of its population, and pitied the poor sons of earth, toiling in its bowels, like Gnomes in the "dark gold-mines."

People may say what they please about cockney pastorals, but, after all, there is a vast deal of rural beauty about the western vicinity of London; and any one that has looked down upon the valley of the West End, with its soft bosom of green pasturage lying open to the south, and dotted with cattle; the steeple of Hampstead rising among rich groves on the brow of the hill; and the learned height of Harrow in the distance; will confess that never has he seen a more absolutely rural landscape in the vicinity of a great metropolis.

Still, however, I found myself not a whit the better off for my frequent change of lodgings; and I began to dis-

cover, that in literature, as in trade, the old proverb holds good, "a rolling stone gathers no moss."

The tranquil beauty of the country played the very vengeance with me. I could not mount my fancy into the termagant vein. I could not conceive, amidst the smiling landscape, a scene of blood and murder; and the smug citizens in breeches and gaiters put all ideas of heroes and bandits out of my brain. I could think of nothing but dulcet subjects, "the Pleasures of Spring"—"the Pleasures of Solitude"—"the Pleasures of Tranquillity"—"the Pleasures of Sentiment"—nothing but pleasures; and I had the painful experience of "the Pleasures of Melancholy" too strongly in my recollection to be beguiled by them.

Chance at length befriended me. I had frequently, in my ramblings, loitered about Hampstead Hill, which is a kind of Parnassus of the metropolis. At such times I occasionally took my dinner at Jack Straw's Castle. It is a country inn so named; the very spot where that notorious rebel and his followers held their council of war. It is a favorite resort of citizens when rurally inclined, as it commands fine fresh air, and a good view of the city. I sat one day in the public room of this inn, ruminating over a beefsteak and a pint of porter, when my imagination kindled up with ancient and heroic images. I had long wanted a theme and a hero; both suddenly broke upon my mind. I determined to write a poem on the history of Jack Straw. I was so full of the subject, that I

was fearful of being anticipated. I wondered that none of the poets of the day in their search after ruffian heroes, had never thought of Jack Straw. I went to work pell-mell, blotted several sheets of paper with choice floating thoughts, and battles, and descriptions, to be ready at a moment's warning. In a few days' time I sketched out the skeleton of my poem, and nothing was wanting but to give it flesh and blood. I used to take my manuscript and stroll about Caen Wood, and read aloud; and would dine at the Castle, by way of keeping up the vein of thought.

I was there one day, at rather a late hour, in the public room. There was no other company but one man, who sat enjoying his pint of porter at the window, and noticing the passers-by. He was dressed in a green shooting-coat. His countenance was strongly marked: he had a hooked nose; a romantic eye, excepting that it had something of a squint; and altogether, as I thought, a poetical style of head. I was quite taken with the man, for you must know I am a little of a physiognomist; I set him down at once for either a poet or a philosopher.

As I like to make new acquaintances, considering every man a volume of human nature, I soon fell into conversation with the stranger, who, I was pleased to find, was by no means difficult of access. After I had dined, I joined him at the window, and we became so sociable that I proposed a bottle of wine together, to which he most cheerfully assented.

I was too full of my poem to keep long quiet on the subject, and began to talk about the origin of the tavern, and the history of Jack Straw. I found my new acquaintance to be perfectly at home on the topic, and to jump exactly with my humor in every respect. I became elevated by the wine and the conversation. In the fulness of an author's feelings, I told him of my projected poem, and repeated some passages, and he was in raptures. He was evidently of a strong poetical turn.

"Sir," said he, filling my glass at the same time, "our poets don't look at home. I don't see why we need go out of old England for robbers and rebels to write about. I like your Jack Straw, sir,—he's a home-made hero. I like him, sir—I like him exceedingly. He's English to the backbone — damme — Give me honest old England after all! Them's my sentiments, sir."

"I honor your sentiment," cried I, zealously; "it is exactly my own. An English ruffian is as good a ruffian for poetry as any in Italy, or Germany, or the Archipelago; but it is hard to make our poets think so."

"More shame for them!" replied the man in green. "What a plague would they have? What have we to do with their Archipelagos of Italy and Germany? Haven't we heaths and commons and highways on our own little island—ay, and stout fellows to pad the hoof over them too? Stick to home, I say,—them's my sentiments.—Come, sir, my service to you—I agree with you perfectly."

"Poets, in old times, had right notions on this subject," continued I; "witness the fine old ballads about Robin Hood, Allan a'Dale, and other stanch blades of yore."

"Right, sir, right," interrupted he; "Robin Hood! he was the lad to cry stand! to a man, and never to flinch."

"Ah, sir," said I, "they had famous bands of robbers in the good old times; those were glorious poetical days. The merry crew of Sherwood Forest, who led such a roving picturesque life, 'under the greenwood tree.' I have often wished to visit their haunts, and tread the scenes of the exploits of Friar Tuck, and Clymm of the Clough, and Sir William of Cloudeslie."

"Nay, sir," said the gentleman in green, "we have had several very pretty gangs since that day. Those gallant dogs that kept about the great heaths in the neighborhood of London, about Bagshot, and Hounslow, and Blackheath, for instance. Come, sir, my service to you. You don't drink."

"I suppose," cried I, emptying my glass, "I suppose you have heard of the famous Turpin, who was born in this very village of Hampstead, and who used to lurk with his gang in Epping Forest about a hundred years since?"

"Have I?" cried he, "to be sure I have! A hearty old blade that. Sound as pitch. Old Turpentine! as we used to call him. A famous fine fellow, sir."

"Well, sir," continued I, "I have visited Waltham

Abbey and Chingford Church merely from the stories I heard when a boy of his exploits there, and I have searched Epping Forest for the cavern where he used to conceal himself. You must know," added I, "that I am a sort of amateur of highwaymen. They were dashing daring fellows: the best apologies that we had for the knights-errant of yore. Ah, sir! the country has been sinking gradually into tameness and commonplace. We are losing the old English spirit. The bold knights of the Post have all dwindled down into lurking footpads, and sneaking pickpockets; there's no such thing as a dashing, gentleman-like robbery committed nowadays on the King's highway: a man may roll from one end of England to the other in a drowsy coach, or jingling post-chaise, without any other adventure than that of being occasionally overturned, sleeping in damp sheets, or having an ill-cooked dinner. We hear no more of public coaches being stopped and robbed by a well-mounted gang of resolute fellows, with pistols in their hands, and crapes over their faces. What a pretty poetical incident was it, for example, in domestic life, for a family-carriage, on its way to a country-seat, to be attacked about dark; the old gentleman eased of his purse and watch, the ladies of their necklaces and ear-rings, by a politely-spoken highwayman on a blood-mare, who afterwards leaped the hedge and galloped across the country, to the admiration of Miss Caroline, the daughter, who would

write a long and romantic account of the adventure to her friend, Miss Juliana, in town. Ah, sir! we meet with nothing of such incidents nowadays."

"That, sir," said my companion, taking advantage of a pause, when I stopped to recover breath, and to take a glass of wine which he had just poured out, "that, sir, craving your pardon, is not owing to any want of old English pluck. It is the effect of this cursed system of banking. People do not travel with bags of gold as they did formerly. They have post-notes, and drafts on bankers. To rob a coach is like catching a crow, where you have nothing but carrion flesh and feathers for your pains. But a coach in old times, sir, was as rich as a Spanish galleon. It turned out the yellow boys bravely. And a private carriage was a cool hundred or two at least."

I cannot express how much I was delighted with the sallies of my new acquaintance. He told me that he often frequented the Castle, and would be glad to know more of me; and I proposed myself many a pleasant afternoon with him, when I should read him my poem as it proceeded, and benefit by his remarks; for it was evident he had the true poetical feeling.

"Come, sir," said he, pushing the bottle: "Damme, I like you! you're a man after my own heart. I'm cursed slow in making new acquaintances. One must be on the reserve, you know. But when I meet with a man of your kidney, damme, my heart jumps at once to him. Them's my sentiments, sir. Come, sir, here's Jack Straw's

health! I presume one can drink it nowadays without treason!"

"With all my heart," said I, gayly, "and Dick Turpin's into the bargain!"

"Ah, sir," said the man in green, "those are the kind of men for poetry. The Newgate Calendar, sir! the Newgate Calendar is your only reading! There's the place to look for bold deeds and dashing fellows."

We were so much pleased with each other that we sat until a late hour. I insisted on paying the bill, for both my purse and my heart were full, and I agreed that he should pay the score at our next meeting. As the coaches had all gone that run between Hampstead and London, we had to return on foot. He was so delighted with the idea of my poem, that he could talk of nothing else. He made me repeat such passages as I could remember; and though I did it in a very mangled manner, having a wretched memory, yet he was in raptures.

Every now and then he would break out with some scrap which he would misquote most terribly, would rub his hands and exclaim, "By Jupiter, that's fine, that's noble! Damme, sir, if I can conceive how you hit upon such ideas!"

I must confess I did not always relish his misquotations, which sometimes made absolute nonsense of the passages; but what author stands upon trifles when he is praised?

Never had I spent a more delightful evening. I did

not perceive how the time flew. I could not bear to separate, but continued walking on, arm in arm, with him, past my lodgings, through Camden Town, and across Crackskull Common, talking the whole way about my poem.

When we were half-way across the common, he interrupted me in the midst of a quotation, by telling me that this had been a famous place for footpads, and was still occasionally infested by them; and that a man had recently been shot there in attempting to defend himself. —"The more fool he!" cried I; "a man is an idiot to risk life, or even limb, to save a paltry purse of money. It's quite a different case from that of a duel, where one's honor is concerned. For my part," added I, "I should never think of making resistance against one of those desperadoes."

"Say you so?" cried my friend in green, turning suddenly upon me, and putting a pistol to my breast; "why, then, have at you, my lad!—come—disburse! empty! unsack!"

In a word, I found that the muse had played me another of her tricks, and had betrayed me into the hands of a footpad. There was no time to parley; he made me turn my pockets inside out; and hearing the sound of distant footsteps, he made one fell swoop upon purse, watch, and all; gave me a thwack on my unlucky pate that laid me sprawling on the ground, and scampered away with his booty.

I saw no more of my friend in green until a year or two afterwards; when I caught sight of his poetical countenance among a crew of scapegraces heavily ironed, who were on the way for transportation. He recognized me at once, tipped me an impudent wink, and asked me how I came on with the history of Jack Straw's Castle.

The catastrophe at Crackskull Common put an end to my summer's campaign. I was cured of my poetical enthusiasm for rebels, robbers, and highwaymen. I was put out of conceit of my subject, and, what was worse, I was lightened of my purse, in which was almost every farthing I had in the world. So I abandoned Sir Richard Steele's cottage in despair, and crept into less celebrated, though no less poetical and airy lodgings in a garret in town.

I now determined to cultivate the society of the literary, and to enroll myself in the fraternity of authorship. It is by the constant collision of mind, thought I, that authors strike out the sparks of genius, and kindle up with glorious conceptions. Poetry is evidently a contagious complaint. I will keep company with poets; who knows but I may catch it as others have done?

I found no difficulty in making a circle of literary acquaintances, not having the sin of success lying at my door: indeed the failure of my poem was a kind of recommendation to their favor. It is true my new friends were not of the most brilliant names in literature; but then if you would take their words for it, they were like the

prophets of old, men of whom the world was not worthy; and who were to live in future ages, when the ephemeral favorites of the day should be forgotten.

I soon discovered, however, that the more I mingled in literary society, the less I felt capable of writing; that poetry was not so catching as I imagined; and that in familiar life there was often nothing less poetical than a poet. Besides, I wanted the *esprit de corps* to turn these literary fellowships to any account. I could not bring myself to enlist in any particular sect. I saw something to like in them all, but found that would never do, for that the tacit condition on which a man enters into one of these sects is, that he abuses all the rest.

I perceived that there were little knots of authors who lived with, and for, and by one another. They considered themselves the salt of the earth. They fostered and kept up a conventional vein of thinking and talking, and joking on all subjects; and they cried each other up to the skies. Each sect had its particular creed; and set up certain authors as divinities, and fell down and worshipped them; and considered every one who did not worship them, or who worshipped any other, as a heretic, and an infidel.

In quoting the writers of the day, I generally found them extolling names of which I had scarcely heard, and talking slightingly of others who were the favorites of the public. If I mentioned any recent work from the pen of a first-rate author, they had not read it; they had

not time to read all that was spawned from the press; he wrote too much to write well;—and then they would break out into raptures about some Mr. Timson, or Tomson, or Jackson, whose works were neglected at the present day, but who was to be the wonder and delight of posterity! Alas! what heavy debts is this neglectful world daily accumulating on the shoulders of poor posterity!

But, above all, it was edifying to hear with what contempt they would talk of the great. Ye gods! how immeasurably the great are despised by the small fry of literature! It is true, an exception was now and then made of some nobleman, with whom, perhaps, they had casually shaken hands at an election, or hob or nobbed at a public dinner, and was pronounced a "devilish good fellow," and "no humbug"; but, in general, it was enough for a man to have a title, to be the object of their sovereign disdain: you have no idea how poetically and philosophically they would talk of nobility.

For my part, this affected me but little; for though I had no bitterness against the great, and did not think the worse of a man for having innocently been born to a title, yet I did not feel myself at present called upon to resent the indignities poured upon them by the little. But the hostility to the great writers of the day went sore against the grain with me. I could not enter into such feuds, nor participate in such animosities. I had not become author sufficiently to hate other authors. I could still

find pleasure in the novelties of the press, and could find it in my heart to praise a contemporary, even though he were successful. Indeed I was miscellaneous in my taste, and could not confine it to any age or growth of writers. I could turn with delight from the glowing pages of Byron to the cool and polished raillery of Pope; and after wandering among the sacred groves of "Paradise Lost," I could give myself up to voluptuous abandonment in the enchanted bowers of "Lalla Rookh."

"I would have my authors," said I, "as various as my wines, and, in relishing the strong and the racy, would never decry the sparkling and exhilarating. Port and Sherry are excellent standbys, and so is Madeira; but Claret and Burgundy may be drunk now and then without disparagement to one's palate, and Champagne is a beverage by no means to be despised."

Such was the tirade I uttered one day when a little flushed with ale at a literary club. I uttered it, too, with something of a flourish, for I thought my simile a clever one. Unluckily, my auditors were men who drank beer and hated Pope; so my figure about wines went for nothing, and my critical toleration was looked upon as downright heterodoxy. In a word, I soon became like a freethinker in religion, an outlaw from every sect, and fair game for all. Such are the melancholy consequences of not hating in literature.

I see you are growing weary, so I will be brief with the residue of my literary career. I will not detain you with

a detail of my various attempts to get astride of Pegasus; of the poems I have written which were never printed, the plays I have presented which were never performed, and the tracts I have published which were never purchased. It seemed as if booksellers, managers, and the very public, had entered into a conspiracy to starve me. Still I could not prevail upon myself to give up the trial, nor abandon those dreams of renown in which I had indulged. How should I be able to look the literary circle of my native village in the face, if I were so completely to falsify their predictions? For some time longer, therefore, I continued to write for fame, and was, of course, the most miserable dog in existence, besides being in continual risk of starvation. I accumulated loads of literary treasure on my shelves—loads which were to be treasures to posterity; but, alas! they put not a penny into my purse. What was all this wealth to my present necessities? I could not patch my elbows with an ode; nor satisfy my hunger with blank verse. "Shall a man fill his belly with the east wind?" says the proverb. He may as well do so as with poetry.

I have many a time strolled sorrowfully along, with a sad heart and an empty stomach, about five o'clock, and looked wistfully down the areas in the west end of the town, and seen through the kitchen-windows the fires gleaming, and the joints of meat turning on the spits and dripping with gravy, and the cook-maids beating up puddings, or trussing turkeys, and felt for the moment

that if I could but have the run of one of those kitchens, Apollo and the Muses might have the hungry heights of Parnassus for me. Oh, sir! talk of meditations among the tombs,—they are nothing so melancholy as the meditations of a poor devil without penny in pouch, along a line of kitchen-windows towards dinner-time.

At length, when almost reduced to famine and despair, the idea all at once entered my head, that perhaps I was not so clever a fellow as the village and myself had supposed. It was the salvation of me. The moment the idea popped into my brain it brought conviction and comfort with it. I awoke as from a dream: I gave up immortal fame to those who could live on air; took to writing for mere bread; and have ever since had a very tolerable life of it. There is no man of letters so much at his ease, sir, as he who has no character to gain or lose. I had to train myself to it a little, and to clip my wings short at first, or they would have carried me up into poetry in spite of myself. So I determined to begin by the opposite extreme, and abandoning the higher regions of the craft, I came plump down to the lowest, and turned creeper.

"Creeper! and pray what is that?" said I.

"Oh, sir, I see you are ignorant of the language of the craft; a creeper is one who furnishes the newspapers with paragraphs at so much a line; and who goes about in quest of misfortunes; attends the Bow Street Office; the Courts of Justice, and every other den of mischief

and iniquity. We are paid at the rate of a penny a line, and as we can sell the same paragraph to almost every paper, we sometimes pick up a very decent day's work. Now and then the Muse is unkind, or the day uncommonly quiet, and then we rather starve; and sometimes the unconscionable editors will clip our paragraphs when they are a little too rhetorical, and snip off twopence or threepence at a go. I have many a time had my pot of porter snipped off my dinner in this way, and have had to dine with dry lips. However, I cannot complain. I rose gradually in the lower ranks of the craft, and am now, I think, in the most comfortable region of literature."

"And pray," said I, "what may you be at present?"

"At present," said he, "I am a regular job-writer, and turn my hand to anything. I work up the writings of others at so much a sheet, turn off translations; write second-rate articles to fill up reviews and magazines; compile travels and voyages, and furnish theatrical criticisms for the newspapers. All this authorship, you perceive, is anonymous; it gives me no reputation, except among the trade; where I am considered an author of all work, and am always sure of employ. That's the only reputation I want. I sleep soundly, without dread of duns or critics, and leave immortal fame to those that choose to fret and fight about it. Take my word for it, the only happy author in this world is he who is below the care of reputation."

NOTORIETY.

WHEN we had emerged from the literary nest of honest Dribble, and had passed safely through the dangers of Breakneck Stairs, and the labyrinths of Fleet Market, Buckthorne indulged in many comments upon the peep into literary life which he had furnished me.

I expressed my surprise at finding it so different a world from what I had imagined. "It is always so," said he, "with strangers. The land of literature is a fairy land to those who view it at a distance, but, like all other landscapes, the charm fades on a nearer approach, and the thorns and briars become visible. The republic of letters is the most factious and discordant of all republics, ancient or modern."

"Yet," said I, smiling, "you would not have me take honest Dribble's experience as a view of the land. He is but a mousing owl; a mere groundling. We should have quite a different strain from one of those fortunate authors whom we see sporting about the empyreal heights of fashion, like swallows in the blue sky of a summer's day."

"Perhaps we might," replied he, "but I doubt it. I doubt whether, if any one, even of the most successful, were to tell his actual feelings, you would not find the truth of friend Dribble's philosophy with respect to reputation. One you would find carrying a gay face to the world, while some vulture critic was preying upon his very liver. Another, who was simple enough to mistake fashion for fame, you would find watching countenances, and cultivating invitations, more ambitious to figure in the *beau monde* than the world of letters, and apt to be rendered wretched by the neglect of an illiterate peer, or a dissipated duchess. Those who were rising to fame, you would find tormented with anxiety to get higher; and those who had gained the summit, in constant apprehension of a decline.

"Even those who are indifferent to the buzz of notoriety, and the farce of fashion, are not much better off, being incessantly harassed by intrusions on their leisure, and interruptions of their pursuits; for, whatever may be his feelings, when once an author is launched into notoriety, he must go the rounds until the idle curiosity of the day is satisfied, and he is thrown aside to make way for some new caprice. Upon the whole, I do not know but he is most fortunate who engages in the whirl through ambition, however tormenting; as it is doubly irksome to be obliged to join in the game without being interested in the stake.

"There is a constant demand in the fashionable world

for novelty; every nine days must have its wonder, no matter of what kind. At one time it is an author; at another, a fire-eater; at another, a composer, an Indian juggler, or an Indian chief; a man from the North Pole or the Pyramids; each figures through his brief term of notoriety, and then makes way for the succeeding wonder. You must know that we have oddity fanciers among our ladies of rank, who collect about them all kinds of remarkable beings; fiddlers, statesmen, singers, warriors, artists, philosophers, actors, and poets; every kind of personage, in short, who is noted for something peculiar; so that their routs are like fancy-balls, where every one comes 'in character.'

"I have had infinite amusement at these parties in noticing how industriously every one was playing a part, and acting out of his natural line. There is not a more complete game at cross purposes than the intercourse of the literary and the great. The fine gentleman is always anxious to be thought a wit, and the wit a fine gentleman.

"I have noticed a lord endeavoring to look wise and talk learnedly with a man of letters, who was aiming at a fashionable air, and the tone of a man who had lived about town. The peer quoted a score or two learned authors, with whom he would fain be thought intimate, while the author talked of Sir John this, and Sir Harry that, and extolled the Burgundy he had drunk at Lord Such-a-one's. Each seemed to forget that he could only

be interesting to the other in his proper character. Had the peer been merely a man of erudition, the author would never have listened to his prosing; and had the author known all the nobility in the Court Calendar, it would have given him no interest in the eyes of the peer.

"In the same way I have seen a fine lady, remarkable for beauty, weary a philosopher with flimsy metaphysics, while the philosopher put on an awkward air of gallantry, played with her fan, and prattled about the Opera. I have heard a sentimental poet talk very stupidly with a statesman about the national debt; and on joining a knot of scientific old gentlemen conversing in a corner, expecting to hear the discussion of some valuable discovery, I found they were only amusing themselves with a fat story."

A PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER.

THE anecdotes I had heard of Buckthorne's early schoolmate, together with a variety of peculiarities which I had remarked in himself, gave me a strong curiosity to know something of his own history. I am a traveller of the good old school, and am fond of the custom laid down in books, according to which, whenever travellers met, they sat down forthwith, and gave a history of themselves and their adventures. This Buckthorne, too, was a man much to my taste; he had seen the world, and mingled with society, yet retained the strong eccentricities of a man who had lived much alone. There was a careless dash of good-humor about him, which pleased me exceedingly; and at times an odd tinge of melancholy mingled with his humor, and gave it an additional zest. He was apt to run into long speculations upon society and manners, and to indulge in whimsical views of human nature; yet there was nothing ill-tempered in his satire. It ran more upon the follies than the vices of mankind; and even the follies of his fellow-man were treated with the leniency of one who felt himself to be but frail. He had evidently been a little

chilled and buffeted by fortune, without being soured thereby: as some fruits become mellower and more generous in their flavor from having been bruised and frost-bitten.

I have always had a great relish for the conversation of practical philosophers of this stamp, who have profited by the "sweet uses" of adversity without imbibing its bitterness; who have learned to estimate the world rightly, yet good-humoredly; and who, while they perceive the truth of the saying, that "all is vanity," are yet able to do so without vexation of spirit.

Such a man was Buckthorne. In general a laughing philosopher; and if at any time a shade of sadness stole across his brow, it was but transient; like a summer cloud, which soon goes by, and freshens and revives the fields over which it passes.

I was walking with him one day in Kensington Gardens,—for he was a knowing epicure in all the cheap pleasures and rural haunts within reach of the metropolis. It was a delightful warm morning in spring; and he was in the happy mood of a pastoral citizen, when just turned loose into grass and sunshine. He had been watching a lark which, rising from a bed of daisies and yellow-cups, had sung his way up to a bright snowy cloud floating in the deep blue sky.

"Of all birds," said he, "I should like to be a lark. He revels in the brightest time of the day, in the happiest season of the year, among fresh meadows and opening

flowers; and when he has sated himself with the sweetness of earth, he wings his flight up to heaven as if he would drink in the melody of the morning stars. Hark to that note! How it comes thrilling down upon the ear! What a stream of music, note falling over note, in delicious cadence! Who would trouble his head about operas and concerts when he could walk in the fields and hear such music for nothing? These are the enjoyments which set riches at scorn, and make even a poor man independent:

> "'I care not, Fortune, what you me deny:
> You cannot rob me of free nature's grace;
> You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
> Through which Aurora shows her bright'ning face;
> You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
> The woods and lawns by living streams at eve'——

"Sir, there are homilies in nature's works worth all the wisdom of the schools, if we could but read them rightly, and one of the pleasantest lessons I ever received in time of trouble, was from hearing the notes of the lark."

I profited by this communicative vein to intimate to Buckthorne a wish to know something of the events of his life, which I fancied must have been an eventful one.

He smiled when I expressed my desire. "I have no great story," said he, "to relate. A mere tissue of errors and follies. But, such as it is, you shall have one epoch of it, by which you may judge of the rest." And so, without any further prelude, he gave me the following anecdotes of his early adventures.

BUCKTHORNE:

OR,

THE YOUNG MAN OF GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

I WAS born to very little property, but to great expectations — which is, perhaps, one of the most unlucky fortunes a man can be born to. My father was a country gentleman, the last of a very ancient and honorable, but decayed family, and resided in an old hunting-lodge in Warwickshire. He was a keen sportsman, and lived to the extent of his moderate income, so that I had little to expect from that quarter; but then I had a rich uncle by the mother's side, a penurious, accumulating curmudgeon, who it was confidently expected would make me his heir, because he was an old bachelor, because I was named after him, and because he hated all the world except myself.

He was, in fact, an inveterate hater, a miser even in misanthropy, and hoarded up a grudge as he did a guinea. Thus, though my mother was an only sister, he had never forgiven her marriage with my father, against whom he had a cold, still, immovable pique, which had lain at the bottom of his heart, like a stone in a well, ever since

they had been school-boys together. My mother, however, considered me as the intermediate being that was to bring everything again into harmony, for she looked upon me as a prodigy—God bless her! my heart overflows whenever I recall her tenderness. She was the most excellent, the most indulgent of mothers. I was her only child: it was a pity she had no more, for she had fondness of heart enough to have spoiled a dozen!

I was sent at an early age to a public school, sorely against my mother's wishes; but my father insisted that it was the only way to make boys hardy. The school was kept by a conscientious prig of the ancient system, who did his duty by the boys intrusted to his care,—that is to say, we were flogged soundly when we did not get our lessons. We were put in classes, and thus flogged on in droves along the highway of knowledge, in much the same manner as cattle are driven to market; where those that are heavy in gait, or short in leg, have to suffer for the superior alertness or longer limbs of their companions.

For my part, I confess it with shame, I was an incorrigible laggard. I have always had the poetical feeling, that is to say, I have always been an idle fellow, and prone to play the vagabond. I used to get away from my books and school whenever I could, and ramble about the fields. I was surrounded by seductions for such a temperament. The school-house was an old-fashioned whitewashed mansion, of wood and plaster,

standing on the skirts of a beautiful village: close by it was the venerable church, with a tall Gothic spire; before it spread a lovely green valley, with a little stream glistening along through willow groves; while a line of blue hills bounding the landscape gave rise to many a summer-day-dream as to the fairy land that lay beyond.

In spite of all the scourgings I suffered at that school to make me love my book, I cannot but look back upon the place with fondness. Indeed, I considered this frequent flagellation as the common lot of humanity, and the regular mode in which scholars were made.

My kind mother used to lament over my details of the sore trials I underwent in the cause of learning; but my father turned a deaf ear to her expostulations. He had been flogged through school himself, and he swore there was no other way of making a man of parts; though, let me speak it with all due reverence, my father was but an indifferent illustration of his theory, for he was considered a grievous blockhead.

My poetical temperament evinced itself at a very early period. The village church was attended every Sunday by a neighboring squire, the lord of the manor, whose park stretched quite to the village, and whose spacious country-seat seemed to take the church under its protection. Indeed, you would have thought the church had been consecrated to him instead of to the Deity. The parish clerk bowed low before him, and the vergers humbled themselves unto the dust in his presence. He

always entered a little late, and with some stir; striking his cane emphatically on the ground, swaying his hat in his hand, and looking loftily to the right and left as he walked slowly up the aisle; and the parson, who always ate his Sunday dinner with him, never commenced service until he appeared. He sat with his family in a large pew, gorgeously lined, humbling himself devoutly on velvet cushions, and reading lessons of meekness and lowliness of spirit out of splendid gold and morocco prayer-books. Whenever the parson spoke of the difficulty of a rich man's entering the kingdom of heaven, the eyes of the congregation would turn towards the "grand pew," and I thought the squire seemed pleased with the application.

The pomp of this pew, and the aristocratical air of the family struck my imagination wonderfully; and I fell desperately in love with a little daughter of the squire's, about twelve years of age. This freak of fancy made me more truant from my studies than ever. I used to stroll about the squire's park, and lurk near the house, to catch glimpses of this damsel at the windows, or playing about the lawn, or walking out with her governess.

I had not enterprise nor impudence enough to venture from my concealment. Indeed I felt like an arrant poacher, until I read one or two of Ovid's Metamorphoses, when I pictured myself as some sylvan deity, and she a coy wood-nymph of whom I was in pursuit. There is something extremely delicious in these early awaken-

ings of the tender passion. I can feel even at this moment the throbbing in my boyish bosom, whenever by chance I caught a glimpse of her white frock fluttering among the shrubbery. I carried about in my bosom a volume of Waller, which I had purloined from my mother's library; and I applied to my little fair one all the compliments lavished upon Sacharissa.

At length I danced with her at a school-ball. I was so awkward a booby, that I dared scarcely speak to her; I was filled with awe and embarrassment in her presence; but I was so inspired, that my poetical temperament for the first time broke out in verse, and I fabricated some glowing rhymes, in which I berhymed the little lady under the favorite name of Sacharissa. I slipped the verses, trembling and blushing, into her hand the next Sunday as she came out of church. The little prude handed them to her mamma; the mamma handed them to the squire; the squire, who had no soul for poetry, sent them in dudgeon to the schoolmaster; and the schoolmaster, with a barbarity worthy of the dark ages, gave me a sound and peculiarly humiliating flogging for thus trespassing upon Parnassus. This was a sad outset for a votary of the Muse; it ought to have cured me of my passion for poetry; but it only confirmed it, for I felt the spirit of a martyr rising within me. What was as well, perhaps, it cured me of my passion for the young lady; for I felt so indignant at the ignominious horsing I had incurred in celebrating her charms,

that I could not hold up my head in church. Fortunately for my wounded sensibility, the Midsummer holidays came on, and I returned home. My mother, as usual, inquired into all my school concerns, my little pleasures, and cares, and sorrows; for boyhood has its share of the one as well as of the other. I told her all, and she was indignant at the treatment I had experienced. She fired up at the arrogance of the squire, and the prudery of the daughter; and as to the schoolmaster, she wondered where was the use of having schoolmasters, and why boys could not remain at home, and be educated by tutors, under the eye of their mothers. She asked to see the verses I had written, and she was delighted with them; for, to confess the truth, she had a pretty taste for poetry. She even showed them to the parson's wife, who protested they were charming; and the parson's three daughters insisted on each having a copy of them.

All this was exceedingly balsamic; and I was still more consoled and encouraged when the young ladies, who were the bluestockings of the neighborhood, and had read Dr. Johnson's Lives quite through, assured my mother that great geniuses never studied, but were always idle; upon which I began to surmise that I was myself something out of the common run. My father, however, was of a very different opinion; for when my mother, in the pride of her heart, showed him my copy of verses, he threw them out of the window, asking her

"if she meant to make a ballad-monger of the boy?" But he was a careless, common-thinking man, and I cannot say that I ever loved him much; my mother absorbed all my filial affection.

I used occasionally, on holidays, to be sent on short visits to the uncle who was to make me his heir; they thought it would keep me in his mind, and render him fond of me. He was a withered, anxious-looking, old fellow, and lived in a desolate old country-seat, which he suffered to go to ruin from absolute niggardliness. He kept but one man-servant, who had lived, or rather starved with him for years. No woman was allowed to sleep in the house. A daughter of the old servant lived by the gate, in what had been a porter's lodge, and was permitted to come into the house about an hour each day, to make the beds and cook a morsel of provisions. The park that surrounded the house was all run wild: the trees were grown out of shape; the fish-ponds stagnant; the urns and statues fallen from their pedestals, and buried among the rank grass. The hares and pheasants were so little molested, except by poachers, that they bred in great abundance, and sported about the rough lawns and weedy avenues. To guard the premises, and frighten off robbers, of whom he was somewhat apprehensive, and visitors, of whom he was in almost equal awe, my uncle kept two or three bloodhounds, who were always prowling round the house, and were the dread of the neighboring peasantry. They were gaunt

and half starved, seemed ready to devour one from mere hunger, and were an effectual check on any stranger's approach to this wizard castle.

Such was my uncle's house, which I used to visit now and then during the holidays. I was, as I before said, the old man's favorite; that is to say, he did not hate me so much as he did the rest of the world. I had been apprised of his character, and cautioned to cultivate his good will; but I was too young and careless to be a courtier, and, indeed, have never been sufficiently studious of my interests to let them govern my feelings. However, we jogged on very well together, and as my visits cost him almost nothing, they did not seem to be very unwelcome. I brought with me my fishing-rod, and half supplied the table from the fish-ponds.

Our meals were solitary and unsocial. My uncle rarely spoke; he pointed to whatever he wanted, and the servant perfectly understood him. Indeed, his man John, or Iron John, as he was called in the neighborhood, was a counterpart of his master. He was a tall, bony old fellow, with a dry wig, that seemed made of cow's-tail, and a face as tough as though it had been made of cow's-hide. He was generally clad in a long, patched livery coat, taken out of the wardrobe of the house, and which bagged loosely about him, having evidently belonged to some corpulent predecessor, in the more plenteous days of the mansion. From long habits of taciturnity the hinges of his jaws seemed to have grown absolutely

rusty, and it cost him as much effort to set them ajar, and to let out a tolerable sentence, as it would have done to set open the iron gates of the park, and let out the old family carriage, that was dropping to pieces in the coach-house.

I cannot say, however, but that I was for some time amused with my uncle's peculiarities. Even the very desolateness of the establishment had something in it that hit my fancy. When the weather was fine, I used to amuse myself in a solitary way, by rambling about the park, and coursing like a colt across its lawns. The hares and pheasants seemed to stare with surprise to see a human being walking these forbidden grounds by day-light. Sometimes I amused myself by jerking stones, or shooting at birds with a bow and arrows; for to have used a gun would have been treason. Now and then my path was crossed by a little red-headed ragged-tailed urchin, the son of the woman at the lodge, who ran wild about the premises. I tried to draw him into familiarity, and to make a companion of him, but he seemed to have imbibed the strange unsociable character of everything around him, and always kept aloof; so I considered him as another Orson, and amused myself with shooting at him with my bow and arrows, and he would hold up his breeches with one hand, and scamper away like a deer.

There was something in all this loneliness and wildness strangely pleasing to me. The great stables, empty and weather-broken, with the names of favorite horses

over the vacant stalls; the windows bricked and boarded up; the broken roofs, garrisoned by rooks and jackdaws, all had a singularly forlorn appearance. One would have concluded the house to be totally uninhabited, were it not for the little thread of blue smoke which now and then curled up, like a corkscrew, from the centre of one of the wide chimneys where my uncle's starveling meal was cooking.

My uncle's room was in a remote corner of the building, strongly secured, and generally locked. I was never admitted into this strong-hold, where the old man would remain for the greater part of the time, drawn up, like a veteran spider, in the citadel of his web. The rest of the mansion, however, was open to me, and I wandered about it unconstrained. The damp and rain which beat in through the broken windows, crumbled the paper from the walls, mouldered the pictures, and gradually destroyed the furniture. I loved to roam about the wide waste chambers in bad weather, and listen to the howling of the wind, and the banging about of the doors and window-shutters. I pleased myself with the idea how completely, when I came to the estate, I would renovate all things, and make the old building ring with merriment, till it was astonished at its own jocundity.

The chamber which I occupied on these visits, had been my mother's when a girl. There was still the toilet-table of her own adorning, the landscapes of her own drawing. She had never seen it since her marriage, but

would often ask me, if everything was still the same. All was just the same, for I loved that chamber on her account, and had taken pains to put everything in order, and to mend all the flaws in the windows with my own hands. I anticipated the time when I should once more welcome her to the house of her fathers, and restore her to this little nestling-place of her childhood.

At length my evil genius, or what, perhaps, is the same thing, the Muse, inspired me with the notion of rhyming again. My uncle, who never went to church, used on Sundays to read chapters out of the Bible; and Iron John, the woman from the lodge, and myself, were his congregation. It seemed to be all one to him what he read, so long as it was something from the Bible. Sometimes, therefore, it would be the Song of Solomon, and this withered anatomy would read about being "stayed with flagons, and comforted with apples, for he was sick of love." Sometimes he would hobble, with spectacles on nose, through whole chapters of hard Hebrew names in Deuteronomy, at which the poor woman would sigh and groan, as if wonderfully moved. His favorite book, however, was "The Pilgrim's Progress"; and when he came to that part which treats of Doubting Castle and Giant Despair, I thought invariably of him and his desolate old country-seat. So much did the idea amuse me, that I took to scribbling about it under the trees in the park; and in a few days had made some progress in a poem, in which I had given a descrip-

tion of the place, under the name of Doubting Castle, and personified my uncle as Giant Despair.

I lost my poem somewhere about the house, and I soon suspected that my uncle had found it, as he harshly intimated to me that I could return home, and that I need not come and see him again till he should send for me.

Just about this time my mother died. I cannot dwell upon the circumstance. My heart, careless and wayward as it is, gushes with the recollection. Her death was an event that perhaps gave a turn to all my after fortunes. With her died all that made home attractive. I had no longer anybody whom I was ambitious to please, or fearful to offend. My father was a good kind of a man in his way, but he had bad maxims in education, and we differed in material points. It makes a vast difference in opinion about the utility of the rod, which end happens to fall to one's share. I never could be brought into my father's way of thinking on the subject.

I now, therefore, began to grow very impatient of remaining at school, to be flogged for things that I did not like. I longed for variety, especially now that I had not my uncle's house to resort to, by way of diversifying the dulness of school with the dreariness of his country-seat.

I was now almost seventeen, tall for my age, and full of idle fancies. I had a roving, inextinguishable desire to see different kinds of life, and different orders of society; and this vagrant humor had been fostered in me by Tom

Dribble, the prime wag and great genius of the school, who had all the rambling propensities of a poet.

I used to sit at my desk in the school, on a fine summer's day, and instead of studying the book which lay open before me, my eye was gazing through the windows on the green fields and blue hills. How I envied the happy groups on the tops of stage-coaches, chatting, and joking, and laughing, as they were whirled by the school-house on their way to the metropolis. Even the wagoners, trudging along beside their ponderous teams, and traversing the kingdom from one end to the other, were objects of envy to me: I fancied to myself what adventures they must experience, and what odd scenes of life they must witness. All this was, doubtless, the poetical temperament working within me, and tempting me forth into a world of its own creation, which I mistook for the world of real life.

While my mother lived, this strong propensity to rove was counteracted by the stronger attractions of home, and by the powerful ties of affection which drew me to her side; but now that she was gone, the attraction had ceased; the ties were severed. I had no longer an anchorage-ground for my heart, but was at the mercy of every vagrant impulse. Nothing but the narrow allowance on which my father kept me, and the consequent penury of my purse, prevented me from mounting to the top of a stage-coach, and launching myself adrift on the great ocean of life.

Just about this time the village was agitated for a day or two, by the passing through of several caravans, containing wild beasts, and other spectacles, for a great fair annually held at a neighboring town.

I had never seen a fair of any consequence, and my curiosity was powerfully awakened by this bustle of preparation. I gazed with respect and wonder at the vagrant personages who accompanied these caravans. I loitered about the village inn, listening with curiosity and delight to the slang talk and cant jokes of the showmen and their followers; and I felt an eager desire to witness this fair, which my fancy decked out as something wonderfully fine.

A holiday afternoon presented, when I could be absent from noon until evening. A wagon was going from the village to the fair; I could not resist the temptation, nor the eloquence of Tom Dribble, who was a truant to the very heart's core. We hired seats, and set off full of boyish expectation. I promised myself that I would but take a peep at the land of promise, and hasten back again before my absence should be noticed.

Heavens! how happy I was on arriving at the fair! How I was enchanted with the world of fun and pageantry around me! The humors of Punch, the feats of the equestrians, the magical tricks of the conjurers! But what principally caught my attention was an itinerant theatre, where a tragedy, pantomime, and farce were all acted in the course of half an hour, and more of the

dramatis personæ murdered than at either Drury Lane or Covent Garden in the course of a whole evening. I have since seen many a play performed by the best actors in the world, but never have I derived half the delight from any that I did from this first representation.

There was a ferocious tyrant in a skullcap like an inverted porringer, and a dress of red baize, magnificently embroidered with gilt leather; with his face so bewhiskered, and his eyebrows so knit and expanded with burnt cork, that he made my heart quake within me, as he stamped about the little stage. I was enraptured too with the surpassing beauty of a distressed damsel in a faded pink silk, and dirty white muslin, whom he held in cruel captivity by way of gaining her affections, and who wept, and wrung her hands, and flourished a ragged white handkerchief, from the top of an impregnable tower of the size of a bandbox.

Even after I had come out from the play, I could not tear myself from the vicinity of the theatre, but lingered, gazing and wondering, and laughing at the dramatis personæ as they performed their antics, or danced upon a stage in front of the booth, to decoy a new set of spectators.

I was so bewildered by the scene, and so lost in the crowd of sensations that kept swarming upon me, that I was like one entranced. I lost my companion, Tom Dribble, in a tumult and scuffle that took place near one of the shows; but I was too much occupied in mind to

think long about him. I strolled about until dark, when the fair was lighted up, and a new scene of magic opened upon me. The illumination of the tents and booths, the brilliant effect of the stages decorated with lamps, with dramatic groups flaunting about them in gaudy dresses, contrasted splendidly with the surrounding darkness; while the uproar of drums, trumpets, fiddles, hautboys, and cymbals, mingled with the harangues of the showmen, the squeaking of Punch, and the shouts and laughter of the crowd, all united to complete my giddy distraction.

Time flew without my perceiving it. When I came to myself and thought of the school, I hastened to return. I inquired for the wagon in which I had come: it had been gone for hours! I asked the time: it was almost midnight! A sudden quaking seized me. How was I to get back to school? I was too weary to make the journey on foot, and I knew not where to apply for a conveyance. Even if I should find one, could I venture to disturb the school-house long after midnight—to arouse that sleeping lion the usher in the very midst of his night's rest?—the idea was too dreadful for a delinquent school-boy. All the horrors of return rushed upon me. My absence must long before this have been remarked;—and absent for a whole night!—a deed of darkness not easily to be expiated. The rod of the pedagogue budded forth into tenfold terrors before my affrighted fancy. I pictured to myself punishment and humiliation

in every variety of form, and my heart sickened at the picture. Alas! how often are the petty ills of boyhood as painful to our tender natures as are the sterner evils of manhood to our robuster minds.

I wandered about among the booths, and I might have derived a lesson from my actual feelings, how much the charms of this world depend upon ourselves; for I no longer saw anything gay or delightful in the revelry around me. At length I lay down, wearied and perplexed, behind one of the large tents, and, covering myself with the margin of the tent-cloth, to keep off the night chill, I soon fell asleep.

I had not slept long, when I was awakened by the noise of merriment within an adjoining booth. It was the itinerant theatre, rudely constructed of boards and canvas. I peeped through an aperture, and saw the whole dramatis personæ, tragedy, comedy, and pantomime, all refreshing themselves after the final dismissal of their auditors. They were merry and gamesome, and made the flimsy theatre ring with their laughter. I was astonished to see the tragedy tyrant in red baize and fierce whiskers, who had made my heart quake as he strutted about the boards, now transformed into a fat, good-humored fellow; the beaming porringer laid aside from his brow, and his jolly face washed from all the terrors of burnt cork. I was delighted, too, to see the distressed damsel, in faded silk and dirty muslin, who had trembled under his tyranny, and afflicted me so much

by her sorrows, now seated familiarly on his knee, and quaffing from the same tankard. Harlequin lay asleep on one of the benches; and monks, satyrs, and vestal virgins were grouped together, laughing outrageously at a broad story told by an unhappy count, who had been barbarously murdered in the tragedy.

This was indeed novelty to me. It was a peep into another planet. I gazed and listened with intense curiosity and enjoyment. They had a thousand odd stories and jokes about the events of the day, and burlesque descriptions and mimickings of the spectators who had been admiring them. Their conversation was full of allusions to their adventures at different places where they had exhibited; the characters they had met with in different villages; and the ludicrous difficulties in which they had occasionally been involved. All past cares and troubles were now turned, by these thoughtless beings, into matters of merriment, and made to contribute to the gayety of the moment. They had been moving from fair to fair about the kingdom, and were the next morning to set out on their way to London. My resolution was taken. I stole from my nest, and crept through a hedge into a neighboring field, where I went to work to make a tatterdemalion of myself. I tore my clothes; soiled them with dirt; begrimed my face and hands, and crawling near one of the booths, purloined an old hat, and left my new one in its place. It was an honest theft, and I hope may not hereafter rise up in judgment against me.

I now ventured to the scene of merry-making, and presenting myself before the dramatic corps, offered myself as a volunteer. I felt terribly agitated and abashed, for never before "stood I in such a presence." I had addressed myself to the manager of the company. He was a fat man, dressed in dirty white, with a red sash fringed with tinsel swathed round his body; his face was smeared with paint, and a majestic plume towered from an old spangled black bonnet. He was the Jupiter Tonans of this Olympus, and was surrounded by the inferior gods and goddesses of his court. He sat on the end of a bench, by a table, with one arm akimbo, and the other extended to the handle of a tankard, which he had slowly set down from his lips, as he surveyed me from head to foot. It was a moment of awful scrutiny; and I fancied the groups around, all watching as in silent suspense, and waiting for the imperial nod.

He questioned me as to who I was; what were my qualifications; and what terms I expected. I passed myself off for a discharged servant from a gentleman's family; and as, happily, one does not require a special recommendation to get admitted into bad company, the questions on that head were easily satisfied. As to my accomplishments, I could spout a little poetry, and knew several scenes of plays, which I had learnt at school exhibitions; I could dance——. That was enough. No further questions were asked me as to accomplishments; it was the very thing they wanted; and as I asked no

wages but merely meat and drink, and safe conduct about the world, a bargain was struck in a moment.

Behold me, therefore, transformed in a sudden from a gentleman student to a dancing buffoon; for such, in fact, was the character in which I made my debut. I was one of those who formed the groups in the dramas, and was principally employed on the stage in front of the booth to attract company. I was equipped as a satyr, in a dress of drab frieze that fitted to my shape, with a great laughing mask, ornamented with huge ears and short horns. I was pleased with the disguise, because it kept me from the danger of being discovered, whilst we were in that part of the country; and as I had merely to dance and make antics, the character was favorable to a debutant—being almost on a par with Snug's part of the lion, which required nothing but roaring.

I cannot tell you how happy I was at this sudden change in my situation. I felt no degradation, for I had seen too little of society to be thoughtful about the difference of rank; and a boy of sixteen is seldom aristocratical. I had given up no friend, for there seemed to be no one in the world that cared for me, now that my poor mother was dead; I had given up no pleasure, for my pleasure was to ramble about and indulge the flow of a poetical imagination, and I now enjoyed it in perfection. There is no life so truly poetical as that of a dancing buffoon.

It may be said that all this argued grovelling inclinations. I do not think so. Not that I mean to vindicate myself in any great degree: I know too well what a whimsical compound I am. But in this instance I was seduced by no love of low company, nor disposition to indulge in low vices. I have always despised the brutally vulgar, and had a disgust at vice, whether in high or low life. I was governed merely by a sudden and thoughtless impulse. I had no idea of resorting to this profession as a mode of life, or of attaching myself to these people, as my future class of society. I thought merely of a temporary gratification to my curiosity, and an indulgence of my humors. I had already a strong relish for the peculiarities of character and the varieties of situation, and I have always been fond of the comedy of life, and desirous of seeing it through all its shifting scenes.

In mingling, therefore, among mountebanks and buffoons, I was protected by the very vivacity of imagination which had led me among them; I moved about, enveloped, as it were, in a protecting delusion, which my fancy spread around me. I assimilated to these people only as they struck me poetically; their whimsical ways and a certain picturesqueness in their mode of life entertained me; but I was neither amused nor corrupted by their vices. In short, I mingled among them, as Prince Hal did among his graceless associates, merely to gratify my humor.

I did not investigate my motives in this manner, at the time, for I was too careless and thoughtless to reason about the matter; but I do so now, when I look back with trembling to think of the ordeal to which I unthinkingly exposed myself, and the manner in which I passed through it. Nothing, I am convinced, but the poetical temperament, that hurried me into the scrape, brought me out of it without my becoming an arrant vagabond.

Full of the enjoyment of the moment, giddy with the wildness of animal spirits, so rapturous in a boy, I capered, I danced, I played a thousand fantastic tricks about the stage, in the villages in which we exhibited; and I was universally pronounced the most agreeable monster that had ever been seen in those parts. My disappearance from school had awakened my father's anxiety; for I one day heard a description of myself cried before the very booth in which I was exhibiting, with the offer of a reward for any intelligence of me. I had no great scruple about letting my father suffer a little uneasiness on my account; it would punish him for past indifference, and would make him value me the more when he found me again.

I have wondered that some of my comrades did not recognize me in the stray sheep that was cried; but they were all, no doubt, occupied by their own concerns. They were all laboring seriously in their antic vocation; for folly was a mere trade with most of them, and they often grinned and capered with heavy hearts. With me,

on the contrary, it was all real. I acted *con amore*, and rattled and laughed from the irrepressible gayety of my spirits. It is true that, now and then, I started and looked grave on receiving a sudden thwack from the wooden sword of Harlequin in the course of my gambols, as it brought to mind the birch of my schoolmaster. But I soon got accustomed to it, and bore all the cuffing, and kicking, and tumbling about, which form the practical wit of your itinerant pantomime, with a good-humor that made me a prodigious favorite.

The country campaign of the troop was soon at an end, and we set off for the metropolis, to perform at the fairs which are held in its vicinity. The greater part of our theatrical property was sent on direct, to be in a state of preparation for the opening of the fairs; while a detachment of the company travelled slowly on, foraging among the villages. I was amused with the desultory, hap-hazard kind of life we led; here to-day and gone to-morrow. Sometimes revelling in ale-houses, sometimes feasting under hedges in the green fields. When audiences were crowded, and business profitable, we fared well; and when otherwise, we fared scantily, consoled ourselves, and made up with anticipations of the next day's success.

At length the increasing frequency of coaches hurrying past us, covered with passengers; the increasing number of carriages, carts, wagons, gigs, droves of cattle and flocks of sheep, all thronging the road; the snug

country boxes with trim flower-gardens, twelve feet square, and their trees twelve feet high, all powdered with dust, and the innumerable seminaries for young ladies and gentlemen situated along the road for the benefit of country air and rural retirement; all these insignia announced that the mighty London was at hand. The hurry, and the crowd, and the bustle, and the noise, and the dust, increased as we proceeded, until I saw the great cloud of smoke hanging in the air, like a canopy of state, over this queen of cities.

In this way, then, did I enter the metropolis, a strolling vagabond, on the top of a caravan, with a crew of vagabonds about me; but I was as happy as a prince; for, like Prince Hal, I felt myself superior to my situation, and knew that I could at any time cast it off, and emerge into my proper sphere.

How my eyes sparkled as we passed Hyde Park Corner, and I saw splendid equipages rolling by; with powdered footmen behind, in rich liveries, with fine nosegays, and gold-headed canes; and with lovely women within, so sumptuously dressed, and so surpassingly fair! I was always extremely sensible to female beauty, and here I saw it in all its powers of fascination: for whatever may be said of "beauty unadorned," there is something almost awful in female loveliness decked out in jewelled state. The swanlike neck encircled with diamonds; the raven locks clustered with pearls; the ruby glowing on the snowy bosom, are objects which I could

never contemplate without emotion; and a dazzling white arm clasped with bracelets, and taper, transparent fingers, laden with sparkling rings, are to me irresistible.

My very eyes ached as I gazed at the high and courtly beauty before me. It surpassed all that my imagination had conceived of the sex. I shrank, for a moment, into shame at the company in which I was placed, and repined at the vast distance that seemed to intervene between me and these magnificent beings.

I forbear to give a detail of the happy life I led about the skirts of the metropolis, playing at the various fairs held there during the latter part of spring, and the beginning of summer. This continued change from place to place, and scene to scene, fed my imagination with novelties, and kept my spirits in a perpetual state of excitement. As I was tall of my age, I aspired, at one time, to play heroes in tragedy; but, after two or three trials, I was pronounced by the manager totally unfit for the line; and our first tragic actress, who was a large woman, and held a small hero in abhorrence, confirmed his decision.

The fact is, I had attempted to give point to language which had no point, and nature to scenes which had no nature. They said I did not fill out my characters; and they were right. The characters had all been prepared for a different sort of man. Our tragedy hero was a round, robustious fellow, with an amazing voice; who

stamped and slapped his breast until his wig shook again; and who roared and bellowed out his bombast until every phrase swelled upon the ear like the sound of a kettle-drum. I might as well have attempted to fill out his clothes as his characters. When we had a dialogue together, I was nothing before him, with my slender voice and discriminating manner. I might as well have attempted to parry a cudgel with a small-sword. If he found me in any way gaining ground upon him, he would take refuge in his mighty voice, and throw his tones like peals of thunder at me, until they were drowned in the still louder thunders of applause from the audience.

To tell the truth, I suspect that I was not shown fair play, and that there was management at the bottom; for without vanity I think I was a better actor than he. As I had not embarked in the vagabond line through ambition, I did not repine at lack of preferment; but I was grieved to find that a vagrant life was not without its cares and anxieties; and that jealousies, intrigues, and mad ambition, were to be found even among vagabonds.

Indeed, as I became more familiar with my situation, and the delusions of fancy gradually faded away, I began to find that my associates were not the happy careless creatures I had at first imagined them. They were jealous of each other's talents; they quarrelled about parts, the same as the actors on the grand theatres; they quarrelled about dresses; and there was one robe of yellow silk, trimmed with red, and a head-dress of three rum-

pled ostrich-feathers, which were continually setting the ladies of the company by the ears. Even those who had attained the highest honors were not more happy than the rest; for Mr. Flimsey himself, our first tragedian, and apparently a jovial good-humored fellow, confessed to me one day, in the fulness of his heart, that he was a miserable man. He had a brother-in-law, a relative by marriage, though not by blood, who was manager of a theatre in a small country town. And this same brother ("a little more than kin but less than kind") looked down upon him, and treated him with contumely, because, forsooth, he was but a strolling player. I tried to console him with the thoughts of the vast applause he daily received, but it was all in vain. He declared that it gave him no delight, and that he should never be a happy man, until the name of Flimsey rivalled the name of Crimp.

How little do those before the scenes know of what passes behind! how little can they judge, from the countenances of actors, of what is passing in their hearts! I have known two lovers quarrel like cats behind the scenes, who were, the moment after, to fly into each other's embraces. And I have dreaded, when our Belvidera was to take her farewell kiss of her Jaffier, lest she should bite a piece out of his cheek. Our tragedian was a rough joker off the stage; our prime clown the most peevish mortal living. The latter used to go about snapping and snarling, with a broad laugh painted on his

countenance; and I can assure you, that, whatever may be said of the gravity of a monkey, or the melancholy of a gibed cat, there is no more melancholy creature in existence than a mountebank off duty.

The only thing in which all parties agreed, was to backbite the manager, and cabal against his regulations. This, however, I have since discovered to be a common trait of human nature, and to take place in all communities. It would seem to be the main business of man to repine at government. In all situations of life, into which I have looked, I have found mankind divided into two grand parties: those who ride, and those who are ridden. The great struggle of life seems to be which shall keep in the saddle. This, it appears to me, is the fundamental principle of politics, whether in great or little life. However, I do not mean to moralize—but one cannot always sink the philosopher.

Well, then, to return to myself, it was determined, as I said, that I was not fit for tragedy, and unluckily, as my study was bad, having a very poor memory, I was pronounced unfit for comedy also; besides, the line of young gentlemen was already engrossed by an actor with whom I could not pretend to enter into competition, he having filled it for almost half a century. I came down again, therefore, to pantomime. In consequence, however, of the good offices of the manager's lady, who had taken a liking to me, I was promoted from the part of the satyr to that of the lover; and with my face

patched and painted, a huge cravat of paper, a steeple-crowned hat, and dangling long-skirted sky-blue coat, was metamorphosed into the lover of Columbine. My part did not call for much of the tender and sentimental. I had merely to pursue the fugitive fair one; to have a door now and then slammed in my face; to run my head occasionally against a post; to tumble and roll about with Pantaloon and the Clown; and to endure the hearty thwacks of Harlequin's wooden sword.

As ill luck would have it, my poetical temperament began to ferment within me, and to work out new troubles. The inflammatory air of a great metropolis, added to the rural scenes in which the fairs were held, such as Greenwich Park, Epping Forest, and the lovely valley of the West End, had a powerful effect upon me. While in Greenwich Park, I was witness to the old holiday games of running down-hill, and kissing in the ring; and then the firmament of blooming faces and blue eyes that would be turned towards me, as I was playing antics on the stage; all these set my young blood and my poetical vein in full flow. In short, I played the character to the life, and became desperately enamored of Columbine. She was a trim, well-made, tempting girl, with a roguish dimpling face, and fine chestnut hair clustering all about it. The moment I got fairly smitten, there was an end to all playing. I was such a creature of fancy and feeling, that I could not put on a pretended, when I was powerfully affected by a real

emotion. I could not sport with a fiction that came so near to the fact. I became too natural in my acting to succeed. And then, what a situation for a lover! I was a mere stripling, and she played with my passion; for girls soon grow more adroit and knowing in these matters than your awkward youngsters. What agonies had I to suffer! Every time that she danced in front of the booth, and made such liberal displays of her charms, I was in torment. To complete my misery, I had a real rival in Harlequin, an active, vigorous, knowing varlet, of six-and-twenty. What had a raw, inexperienced youngster like me to hope from such a competition?

I had still, however, some advantages in my favor. In spite of my change of life, I retained that indescribable something which always distinguishes the gentleman: that something which dwells in a man's air and deportment, and not in his clothes; and which is as difficult for a gentleman to put off, as for a vulgar fellow to put on. The company generally felt it, and used to call me Little Gentleman Jack. The girl felt it too, and, in spite of her predilection for my powerful rival, she liked to flirt with me. This only aggravated my troubles, by increasing my passion, and awakening the jealousy of her party-colored lover.

Alas! think what I suffered at being obliged to keep up an ineffectual chase after my Columbine through whole pantomimes; to see her carried off in the vigorous arms of the happy Harlequin; and to be obliged, instead

of snatching her from him, to tumble sprawling with Pantaloon and the Clown, and bear the infernal and degrading thwacks of my rival's weapon of lath, which, may heaven confound him! (excuse my passion,) the villain laid on with a malicious good-will: nay, I could absolutely hear him chuckle and laugh beneath his accursed mask—I beg pardon for growing a little warm in my narrative—I wish to be cool, but these recollections will sometimes agitate me. I have heard and read of many desperate and deplorable situations of lovers, but none, I think, in which true love was ever exposed to so severe and peculiar a trial.

This could not last long; flesh and blood, at least such flesh and blood as mine, could not bear it. I had repeated heart-burnings and quarrels with my rival, in which he treated me with the mortifying forbearance of a man towards a child. Had he quarrelled outright with me, I could have stomached it, at least I should have known what part to take; but to be humored and treated as a child in the presence of my mistress, when I felt all the bantam spirit of a little man swelling within me—Gods! it was insufferable!

At length, we were exhibiting one day at West End fair, which was at that time a very fashionable resort, and often beleaguered with gay equipages from town. Among the spectators that filled the first row of our little canvas theatre one afternoon, when I had to figure in a pantomime, were a number of young ladies from a board-

ing-school, with their governess. Guess my confusion, when, in the midst of my antics, I beheld among the number my quondam flame; her whom I had berhymed at school, her for whose charms I had smarted so severely, the cruel Sacharissa! What was worse, I fancied she recollected me, and was repeating the story of my humiliating flagellation, for I saw her whispering to her companions and her governess. I lost all consciousness of the part I was acting, and of the place where I was. I felt shrunk to nothing, and could have crept into a rat-hole,—unluckily, none was open to receive me. Before I could recover from my confusion, I was tumbled over by Pantaloon and the Clown, and I felt the sword of Harlequin making vigorous assaults in a manner most degrading to my dignity.

Heaven and earth! was I again to suffer martyrdom in this ignominious manner, in the knowledge, and even before the very eyes of this most beautiful, but most disdainful of fair ones? All my long-smothered wrath broke out at once; the dormant feelings of the gentleman arose within me. Stung to the quick by intolerable mortification, I sprang on my feet in an instant; leaped upon Harlequin like a young tiger; tore off his mask; buffeted him in the face; and soon shed more blood on the stage than had been spilt upon it during a whole tragic campaign of battles and murders.

As soon as Harlequin recovered from his surprise, he returned my assault with interest. I was nothing in his

hands. I was game, to be sure, for I was a gentleman; but he had the clownish advantage of bone and muscle. I felt as if I could have fought even unto the death; and I was likely to do so, for he was, according to the boxing phrase, "putting my head into chancery," when the gentle Columbine flew to my assistance. God bless the women! they are always on the side of the weak and the oppressed!

The battle now became general; the dramatis personæ ranged on either side. The manager interposed in vain; in vain were his spangled black bonnet and towering white feathers seen whisking about, and nodding, and bobbing in the thickest of the fight. Warriors, ladies, priests, satyrs, kings, queens, gods, and goddesses, all joined pell-mell in the affray; never, since the conflict under the walls of Troy, had there been such a chance-medley warfare of combatants, human and divine. The audience applauded, the ladies shrieked, and fled from the theatre; and a scene of discord ensued that baffles all description.

Nothing but the interference of the peace-officers restored some degree of order. The havoc, however, among dresses and decorations, put an end to all further acting for that day. The battle over, the next thing was to inquire why it was begun: a common question among politicians after a bloody and unprofitable war, and one not always easy to be answered. It was soon traced to me, and my unaccountable transport of passion, which

they could only attribute to my having *run a muck*. The manager was judge and jury, and plaintiff into the bargain; and in such cases justice is always speedily administered. He came out of the fight as sublime a wreck as the Santissima Trinidada. His gallant plumes, which once towered aloft, were drooping about his ears; his robe of state hung in ribbons from his back, and but ill concealed the ravages he had suffered in the rear. He had received kicks and cuffs from all sides during the tumult; for every one took the opportunity of slyly gratifying some lurking grudge on his fat carcass. He was a discreet man, and did not choose to declare war with all his company, so he swore all those kicks and cuffs had been given by me, and I let him enjoy the opinion. Some wounds he bore, however, which were the incontestable traces of a woman's warfare: his sleek rosy cheek was scored by trickling furrows, which were ascribed to the nails of my intrepid and devoted Columbine. The ire of the monarch was not to be appeased; he had suffered in his person, and he had suffered in his purse; his dignity, too, had been insulted, and that went for something; for dignity is always more irascible, the more petty tne potentate. He wreaked his wrath upon the beginners of the affray, and Columbine and myself were discharged, at once, from the company.

Figure me, then, to yourself, a stripling of little more than sixteen, a gentleman by birth, a vagabond by trade, turned adrift upon the world, making the best of my way

through the crowd of West End fair; my mountebank dress fluttering in rags about me; the weeping Columbine hanging upon my arm, in splendid but tattered finery; the tears coursing one by one down her face, carrying off the red paint in torrents, and literally "preying upon her damask cheek."

The crowd made way for us as we passed, and hooted in our rear. I felt the ridicule of my situation, but had too much gallantry to desert this fair one, who had sacrificed everything for me. Having wandered through the fair, we emerged, like another Adam and Eve, into unknown regions, and "had the world before us where to choose." Never was a more disconsolate pair seen in the soft valley of West End. The luckless Columbine cast many a lingering look at the fair, which seemed to put on a more than usual splendor: its tents, and booths, and party-colored groups, all brightening in the sunshine, and gleaming among the trees; and its gay flags and streamers fluttering in the light summer airs. With a heavy sigh she would lean on my arm and proceed. I had no hope nor consolation to give her; but she had linked herself to my fortunes, and she was too much of a woman to desert me.

Pensive and silent, then, we traversed the beautiful fields which lie behind Hampstead, and wandered on, until the fiddle, and the hautboy, and the shout, and the laugh, were swallowed up in the deep sound of the big bass-drum, and even that died away into a distant rum-

ble. We passed along the pleasant, sequestered walk of Nightingale Lane. For a pair of lovers, what scene could be more propitious?—But such a pair of lovers! Not a nightingale sang to soothe us: the very gypsies, who were encamped there during the fair, made no offer to tell the fortunes of such an ill-omened couple, whose fortunes, I suppose, they thought too legibly written to need an interpreter; and the gypsy children crawled into their cabins, and peeped out fearfully at us as we went by. For a moment I paused, and was almost tempted to turn gypsy, but the poetical feeling, for the present, was fully satisfied, and I passed on. Thus we travelled and travelled, like a prince and princess in a nursery tale, until we had traversed a part of Hampstead Heath, and arrived in the vicinity of Jack Straw's Castle. Here, wearied and dispirited, we seated ourselves on the margin of the hill, hard by the very milestone where Whittington of yore heard the Bow-bells ring out the presage of his future greatness. Alas! no bell rung an invitation to us, as we looked disconsolately upon the distant city. Old London seemed to wrap itself unsociably in its mantle of brown smoke, and to offer no encouragement to such a couple of tatterdemalions.

For once, at least, the usual course of the pantomime was reversed, Harlequin was jilted, and the lover had carried off Columbine in good earnest. But what was I to do with her? I could not take her in my hand, return to my father, throw myself on my knees, and

crave his forgiveness and blessing, according to dramatic usage. The very dogs would have chased such a draggled-tailed beauty from the grounds.

In the midst of my doleful dumps, some one tapped me on the shoulder, and, looking up, I saw a couple of rough sturdy fellows standing behind me. Not knowing what to expect, I jumped on my legs, and was preparing again to make battle, but was tripped up and secured in a twinkling.

"Come, come, young master," said one of the fellows in a gruff but good-humored tone, "don't let's have any of your tantrums; one would have thought you had had swing enough for this bout. Come; it's high time to leave off harlequinading, and go home to your father."

In fact, I had fallen into the hands of remorseless men. The cruel Sacharissa had proclaimed who I was, and that a reward had been offered throughout the country for any tidings of me; and they had seen a description of me which had been inserted in the public papers. Those harpies, therefore, for the mere sake of filthy lucre, were resolved to deliver me over into the hands of my father, and the clutches of my pedagogue.

In vain I swore I would not leave my faithful and afflicted Columbine. In vain I tore myself from their grasp, and flew to her, and vowed to protect her; and wiped the tears from her cheek, and with them a whole blush that might have vied with the carnation for brilliancy. My persecutors were inflexible; they even

seemed to exult in our distress; and to enjoy this theatrical display of dirt, and finery, and tribulation. I was carried off in despair, leaving my Columbine destitute in the wide world; but many a look of agony did I cast back at her as she stood gazing piteously after me from the brink of Hampstead Hill; so forlorn, so fine, so ragged, so bedraggled, yet so beautiful.

Thus ended my first peep into the world. I returned home, rich in good-for-nothing experience, and dreading the reward I was to receive for my improvement. My reception, however, was quite different from what I had expected. My father had a spice of the devil in him, and did not seem to like me the worse for my freak, which he termed "sowing my wild oats." He happened to have some of his sporting friends to dine the very day of my return; they made me tell some of my adventures, and laughed heartily at them.

One old fellow, with an outrageously red nose, took to me hugely. I heard him whisper to my father that I was a lad of mettle, and might make something clever; to which my father replied, that I had good points, but was an ill-broken whelp, and required a great deal of the whip. Perhaps this very conversation raised me a little in his esteem, for I found the red-nosed old gentleman was a veteran fox-hunter of the neighborhood, for whose opinion my father had vast deference. Indeed, I believe he would have pardoned anything in me more readily than poetry, which he called a cursed, sneaking,

puling, housekeeping employment, the bane of all fine manhood. He swore it was unworthy of a youngster of my expectations, who was one day to have so great an estate, and would be able to keep horses and hounds, and hire poets to write songs for him into the bargain.

I had now satisfied, for a time, my roving propensity. I had exhausted the poetical feeling. I had been heartily buffeted out of my love for theatrical display. I felt humiliated by my exposure, and willing to hide my head anywhere for a season, so that I might be out of the way of the ridicule of the world; for I found folks not altogether so indulgent abroad as they were at my father's table. I could not stay at home; the house was intolerably doleful now that my mother was no longer there to cherish me. Everything around spoke mournfully of her. The little flower-garden in which she delighted, was all in disorder and overrun with weeds. I attempted for a day or two to arrange it, but my heart grew heavier and heavier as I labored. Every little broken-down flower, that I had seen her rear so tenderly, seemed to plead in mute eloquence to my feelings. There was a favorite honeysuckle which I had seen her often training with assiduity, and had heard her say it would be the pride of her garden. I found it grovelling along the ground, tangled and wild, and twining round every worthless weed; and it struck me as an emblem of myself, a mere scatterling, running to waste and uselessness. I could work no longer in the garden.

My father sent me to pay a visit to my uncle, by way of keeping the old gentleman in mind of me. I was received, as usual, without any expression of discontent, which we always considered equivalent to a hearty welcome. Whether he had ever heard of my strolling freak or not, I could not discover, he and his man were both so taciturn. I spent a day or two roaming about the dreary mansion and neglected park, and felt at one time, I believe, a touch of poetry, for I was tempted to drown myself in a fish-pond; I rebuked the evil spirit, however, and it left me. I found the same red-headed boy running wild about the park, but I felt in no humor to hunt him at present. On the contrary, I tried to coax him to me, and to make friends with him; but the young savage was untamable.

When I returned from my uncle's, I remained at home for some time, for my father was disposed, he said, to make a man of me. He took me out hunting with him, and I became a great favorite of the red-nosed squire, because I rode at everything, never refused the boldest leap, and was always sure to be in at the death. I used often, however, to offend my father at hunting-dinners, by taking the wrong side in politics. My father was amazingly ignorant, so ignorant, in fact, as not to know that he knew nothing. He was stanch, however, to church and king, and full of old-fashioned prejudices. Now I had picked up a little knowledge in politics and religion during my rambles with the strollers, and found

myself capable of setting him right as to many of his antiquated notions. I felt it my duty to do so; we were apt, therefore, to differ occasionally in the political discussions which sometimes arose at those hunting-dinners.

I was at that age when a man knows least, and is most vain of his knowledge, and when he is extremely tenacious in defending his opinion upon subjects about which he knows nothing. My father was a hard man for any one to argue with, for he never knew when he was refuted. I sometimes posed him a little, but then he had one argument that always settled the question; he would threaten to knock me down. I believe he at last grew tired of me, because I both out-talked and out-rode him. The red-nosed squire, too, got out of conceit with me, because, in the heat of the chase, I rode over him one day as he and his horse lay sprawling in the dirt: so I found myself getting into disgrace with all the world, and would have got heartily out of humor with myself, had I not been kept in tolerable self-conceit by the parson's three daughters.

They were the same who had admired my poetry on a former occasion, when it had brought me into disgrace at school; and I had ever since retained an exalted idea of their judgment. Indeed, they were young ladies not merely of taste but of science. Their education had been superintended by their mother, who was a blue-stocking. They knew enough of botany to tell the technical names

of all the flowers in the garden, and all their secret concerns into the bargain. They knew music, too, not mere commonplace music, but Rossini and Mozart, and they sang Moore's Irish Melodies to perfection. They had pretty little work-tables, covered with all kinds of objects of taste: specimens of lava, and painted eggs, and work-boxes, painted and varnished by themselves. They excelled in knotting and netting, and painted in water-colors; and made feather fans, and fire-screens, and worked in silks and worsteds; and talked French and Italian, and knew Shakspeare by heart. They even knew something of geology and mineralogy; and went about the neighborhood knocking stones to pieces, to the great admiration and perplexity of the country folk.

I am a little too minute, perhaps, in detailing their accomplishments, but I wish to let you see that these were not commonplace young ladies, but had pretensions quite above the ordinary run. It was some consolation to me, therefore, to find favor in such eyes. Indeed, they had always marked me out for a genius, and considered my late vagrant freak as fresh proof of the fact. They observed that Shakspeare himself had been a mere pickle in his youth; that he had stolen a deer, as every one knew, and kept loose company, and consorted with actors: so I comforted myself marvellously with the idea of having so decided a Shakspearian trait in my character.

The youngest of the three, however, was my grand con-

solation. She was a pale, sentimental girl, with long "hyacinthine" ringlets hanging about her face. She wrote poetry herself, and we kept up a poetical correspondence. She had a taste for the drama, too, and I taught her how to act several of the scenes in "Romeo and Juliet." I used to rehearse the garden-scene under her lattice, which looked out from among woodbine and honeysuckles into the church-yard. I began to think her amazingly pretty as well as clever, and I believe I should have finished by falling in love with her, had not her father discovered our theatrical studies. He was a studious, abstracted man, generally too much absorbed in his learned and religious labors to notice the little foibles of his daughters, and perhaps blinded by a father's fondness; but he unexpectedly put his head out of his study-window one day in the midst of a scene, and put a stop to our rehearsals. He had a vast deal of that prosaic good sense which I forever found a stumbling-block in my poetical path. My rambling freak had not struck the good man as poetically as it had his daughters. He drew his comparison from a different manual. He looked upon me as a prodigal son, and doubted whether I should ever arrive at the happy catastrophe of the fatted calf.

I fancy some intimation was given to my father of this new breaking out of my poetical temperament, for he suddenly intimated that it was high time I should prepare for the university. I dreaded a return to the

school whence I had eloped: the ridicule of my fellow-scholars, and the glance from the squire's pew, would have been worse than death to me. I was fortunately spared the humiliation. My father sent me to board with a country gentleman, who had three or four boys under his care. I went to him joyfully, for I had often heard my mother mention him with esteem. In fact he had been an admirer of hers in his younger days, though too humble in fortune and modest in pretentions to aspire to her hand; but he had ever retained a tender regard for her. He was a good man; a worthy specimen of that valuable body of our country clergy who silently and unostentatiously do a vast deal of good; who are, as it were, woven into the whole system of rural life, and operate upon it with the steady yet unobtrusive influence of temperate piety and learned good sense. He lived in a small village not far from Warwick, one of those little communities where the scanty flock is, in a manner, folded into the bosom of the pastor. The venerable church, in its grass-grown cemetery, was one of those rural temples scattered about our country as if to sanctify the land.

I have the worthy pastor before my mind's eye at this moment, with his mild benevolent countenance, rendered still more venerable by his silver hairs. I have him before me, as I saw him on my arrival, seated in the embowered porch of his small parsonage, with a flower-garden before it, and his pupils gathered round him like his

children. I shall never forget his reception of me; for I believe he thought of my poor mother at the time, and his heart yearned towards her child. His eye glistened when he received me at the door, and he took me into his arms as the adopted child of his affections. Never had I been so fortunately placed. He was one of those excellent members of our church, who help out their narrow salaries by instructing a few gentlemen's sons. I am convinced those little seminaries are among the best nurseries of talent and virtue in the land. Both heart and mind are cultivated and improved. The preceptor is the companion and the friend of his pupils. His sacred character gives him dignity in their eyes, and his solemn functions produce that elevation of mind and sobriety of conduct necessary to those who are to teach youth to think and act worthily.

I speak from my own random observation and experience; but I think I speak correctly. At any rate, I can trace much of what is good in my own heterogeneous compound to the short time I was under the instruction of that good man. He entered into the cares and occupations and amusements of his pupils; and won his way into our confidence, and studied our hearts and minds more intently than we did our books.

He soon sounded the depth of my character. I had become, as I have already hinted, a little liberal in my notions, and apt to philosophize on both politics and religion; having seen something of men and things, and

learnt, from my fellow-philosophers, the strollers, to despise all vulgar prejudices. He did not attempt to cast down my vainglory, nor to question my right view of things; he merely instilled into my mind a little information on these topics; though in a quiet unobtrusive way, that never ruffled a feather of my self-conceit. I was astonished to find what a change a little knowledge makes in one's mode of viewing matters; and how different a subject is when one thinks, or when one only talks about it. I conceived a vast deference for my teacher, and was ambitious of his good opinion. In my zeal to make a favorable impression, I presented him with a whole ream of my poetry. He read it attentively, smiled, and pressed my hand when he returned it to me, but said nothing. The next day he set me at mathematics.

Somehow or other the process of teaching seemed robbed by him of all its austerity. I was not conscious that he thwarted an inclination or opposed a wish; but I felt that, for the time, my inclinations were entirely changed. I became fond of study, and zealous to improve myself. I made tolerable advances in studies which I had before considered as unattainable, and I wondered at my own proficiency. I thought, too, I astonished my preceptor; for I often caught his eyes fixed upon me with a peculiar expression. I suspect, since, that he was pensively tracing in my countenance the early lineaments of my mother.

Education was not apportioned by him into tasks, and enjoined as a labor, to be abandoned with joy the moment the hour of study was expired. We had, it is true, our allotted hours of occupation, to give us habits of method, and of the distribution of time; but they were made pleasant to us, and our feelings were enlisted in the cause. When they were over, education still went on. It pervaded all our relaxations and amusements. There was a steady march of improvement. Much of his instruction was given during pleasant rambles, or when seated on the margin of the Avon; and information received in that way, often makes a deeper impression than when acquired by poring over books. I have many of the pure and eloquent precepts that flowed from his lips associated in my mind with lovely scenes in nature, which make the recollection of them indescribably delightful.

I do not pretend to say that any miracle was effected with me. After all said and done, I was but a weak disciple. My poetical temperament still wrought within me and wrestled hard with wisdom, and, I fear, maintained the mastery. I found mathematics an intolerable task in fine weather. I would be prone to forget my problems, to watch the birds hopping about the windows, or the bees humming about the honeysuckles; and whenever I could steal away, I would wander about the grassy borders of the Avon, and excuse this truant propensity to myself with the idea that I was treading

classic ground, over which Shakspeare had wandered. What luxurious idleness have I indulged, as I lay under the trees and watched the silver waves rippling through the arches of the broken bridge, and laving the rocky bases of old Warwick Castle; and how often have I thought of sweet Shakspeare, and in my boyish enthusiasm have kissed the waves which had washed his native village.

My good preceptor would often accompany me in these desultory rambles. He sought to get hold of this vagrant mood of mind and turn it to some account. He endeavored to teach me to mingle thought with mere sensation; to moralize on the scenes around; and to make the beauties of nature administer to the understanding of the heart. He endeavored to direct my imagination to high and noble objects, and to fill it with lofty images. In a word, he did all he could to make the best of a poetical temperament, and to counteract the mischief which had been done to me by my great expectations.

Had I been earlier put under the care of the good pastor, or remained with him a longer time, I really believe he would have made something of me. He had already brought a great deal of what had been flogged into me into tolerable order, and had weeded out much of the unprofitable wisdom which had sprung up in my vagabondizing. I already began to find that with all my genius a little study would be no disadvantage to me;

and, in spite of my vagrant freaks, I began to doubt my being a second Shakspeare.

Just as I was making these precious discoveries, the good parson died. It was a melancholy day throughout the neighborhood. He had his little flock of scholars, his children, as he used to call us, gathered round him in his dying moments; and he gave us the parting advice of a father, now that he had to leave us, and we were to be separated from each other, and scattered about in the world. He took me by the hand, and talked with me earnestly and affectionately, and called to my mind my mother, and used her name to enforce his dying exhortations; for I rather think he considered me the most erring and heedless of his flock. He held my hand in his, long after he had done speaking, and kept his eye fixed on me tenderly and almost piteously: his lips moved as if he were silently praying for me; and he died away, still holding me by the hand.

There was not a dry eye in the church when the funeral service was read from the pulpit from which he had so often preached. When the body was committed to the earth, our little band gathered round it, and watched the coffin as it was lowered into the grave. The parishioners looked at us with sympathy; for we were mourners not merely in dress but in heart. We lingered about the grave, and clung to one another for a time, weeping and speechless, and then parted, like a band of brothers parting from the paternal hearth, never to assemble there again.

How had the gentle spirit of that good man sweetened our natures, and linked our young hearts together by the kindest ties! I have always had a throb of pleasure at meeting with an old schoolmate, even though one of my truant associates; but whenever, in the course of my life, I have encountered one of that little flock with which I was folded on the banks of the Avon, it has been with a gush of affection, and a glow of virtue, that for the moment have made me a better man.

I was now sent to Oxford, and was wonderfully impressed on first entering it as a student. Learning here puts on all its majesty. It is lodged in palaces; it is sanctified by the sacred ceremonies of religion; it has a pomp and circumstance which powerfully affect the imagination. Such, at least, it had in my eyes, thoughtless as I was. My previous studies with the worthy pastor had prepared me to regard it with deference and awe. He had been educated here, and always spoke of the University with filial fondness and classic veneration. When I beheld the clustering spires and pinnacles of this most august of cities rising from the plain, I hailed them in my enthusiasm as the points of a diadem, which the nation had placed upon the brows of science.

For a time old Oxford was full of enjoyment for me. There was a charm about its monastic buildings; its great Gothic quadrangles; its solemn halls, and shadowy cloisters. I delighted, in the evenings, to get in places surrounded by the colleges, where all modern buildings

were screened from the sight; and to see the Professors and students sweeping along in the dusk in their antiquated caps and gowns. I seemed for a time to be transported among the people and edifices of the old times. I was a frequent attendant, also, of the evening service in the New College Hall; to hear the fine organ, and the choir swelling an anthem in that solemn building, where painting, music, and architecture are in such admirable unison.

A favorite haunt, too, was the beautiful walk bordered by lofty elms along the river, behind the gray walls of Magdalen College, which goes by the name of Addison's Walk, from being his favorite resort when an Oxford student. I became also a lounger in the Bodleian library, and a great dipper into books, though I cannot say that I studied them; in fact, being no longer under direction or control, I was gradually relapsing into mere indulgence of the fancy. Still this would have been pleasant and harmless enough, and I might have awakened from mere literary dreaming to something better. The chances were in my favor, for the riotous times of the University were past. The days of hard drinking were at an end. The old feuds of "Town and Gown," like the civil wars of the White and Red Rose, had died away; and student and citizen slept in peace and whole skins, without risk of being summoned in the night to bloody brawl. It had become the fashion to study at the University, and the odds were always in favor of my following the fashion.

Unluckily, however, I fell in company with a special knot of young fellows, of lively parts and ready wit, who had lived occasionally upon town, and become initiated into the *Fancy*. They voted study to be the toil of dull minds, by which they slowly crept up the hill, while genius arrived at it at a bound. I felt ashamed to play the owl among such gay birds; so I threw by my books, and became a man of spirit.

As my father made me a tolerable allowance, notwithstanding the narrowness of his income, having an eye always to my great expectations, I was enabled to appear to advantage among my companions. I cultivated all kinds of sport and exercises. I was one of the most expert oarsmen that rowed on the Isis. I boxed, fenced, angled, shot, and hunted, and my rooms in college were always decorated with whips of all kinds, spurs, fowling-pieces, fishing-rods, foils, and boxing-gloves. A pair of leather breeches would seem to be throwing one leg out of the half-open drawers, and empty bottles lumbered the bottom of every closet.

My father came to see me at college when I was in the height of my career. He asked me how I came on with my studies, and what kind of hunting there was in the neighborhood. He examined my various sporting apparatus with a curious eye; wanted to know if any of the Professors were fox-hunters, and whether they were generally good shots, for he suspected their studying so much must be hurtful to the sight. We had a day's

shooting together: I delighted him with my skill, and astonished him by my learned disquisitions on horse-flesh, and on Manton's guns; so, upon the whole, he departed highly satisfied with my improvement at college.

I do not know how it is, but I cannot be idle long without getting in love. I had not been a very long time a man of spirit, therefore, before I became deeply enamored of a shopkeeper's daughter in the High-Street, who, in fact, was the admiration of many of the students. I wrote several sonnets in praise of her, and spent half of my pocket-money at the shop, in buying articles which I did not want, that I might have an opportunity of speaking to her. Her father, a severe-looking old gentleman, with bright silver buckles, and a crisp-curled wig, kept a strict guard on her, as the fathers generally do upon their daughters in Oxford; and well they may. I tried to get into his good graces, and to be sociable with him, but all in vain. I said several good things in his shop, but he never laughed: he had no relish for wit and humor. He was one of those dry old gentlemen who keep youngsters at bay. He had already brought up two or three daughters, and was experienced in the ways of students. He was as knowing and wary as a gray old badger that has often been hunted. To see him on Sunday, so stiff and starched in his demeanor, so precise in his dress, with his daughter under his arm, was enough to deter all graceless youngsters from approaching.

I managed, however, in spite of his vigilance, to have several conversations with the daughter, as I cheapened articles in the shop. I made terrible long bargains, and examined the articles over and over before I purchased. In the meantime, I would convey a sonnet or an acrostic under cover of a piece of cambric, or slipped into a pair of stockings; I would whisper soft nonsense into her ear as I haggled about the price; and would squeeze her hand tenderly as I received my half-pence of change in a bit of whity-brown paper. Let this serve as a hint to all haberdashers who have pretty daughters for shop-girls, and young students for customers. I do not know whether my words and looks were very eloquent, but my poetry was irresistible; for, to tell the truth, the girl had some literary taste, and was seldom without a book from the circulating library.

By the divine power of poetry, therefore, which is so potent with the lovely sex, did I subdue the heart of this fair little haberdasher. We carried on a sentimental correspondence for a time across the counter, and I supplied her with rhyme by the stocking-full. At length I prevailed on her to grant an assignation. But how was this to be effected? Her father kept her always under his eye; she never walked out alone; and the house was locked up the moment that the shop was shut. All these difficulties served but to give zest to the adventure. I proposed that the assignation should be in her own chamber, into which I would climb at night. The plan

was irresistible.—A cruel father, a secret lover, and a clandestine meeting! All the little girl's studies from the circulating library seemed about to be realized.

But what had I in view in making this assignation? Indeed, I know not. I had no evil intentions, nor can I say that I had any good ones. I liked the girl, and wanted to have an opportunity of seeing more of her; and the assignation was made, as I have done many things else, heedlessly and without forethought. I asked myself a few questions of the kind, after all my arrangements were made, but the answers were very unsatisfactory. "Am I to ruin this poor thoughtless girl?" said I to myself. "No!" was the prompt and indignant answer. "Am I to run away with her?"—"whither, and to what purpose?"—"Well, then, am I to marry her?"—"Poh! a man of my expectations marry a shopkeeper's daughter!" "What then am I to do with her?" "Hum—why—let me get into the chamber first, and then consider"—and so the self-examination ended.

Well, sir, "come what come might," I stole under cover of the darkness to the dwelling of my dulcinea. All was quiet. At the concerted signal her window was gently opened. It was just above the projecting bow-window of her father's shop, which assisted me in mounting. The house was low, and I was enabled to scale the fortress with tolerable ease. I clambered with a beating heart; I reached the casement; I hoisted my

body half into the chamber; and was welcomed, not by the embraces of my expecting fair one, but by the grasp of the crabbed-looking old father in the crisp-curled wig.

I extricated myself from his clutches, and endeavored to make my retreat; but I was confounded by his cries of thieves! and robbers! I was bothered too by his Sunday cane, which was amazingly busy about my head as I descended, and against which my hat was but a poor protection. Never before had I an idea of the activity of an old man's arm, and the hardness of the knob of an ivory-headed cane. In my hurry and confusion I missed my footing, and fell sprawling on the pavement. I was immediately surrounded by myrmidons, who, I doubt not, were on the watch for me. Indeed, I was in no situation to escape, for I had sprained my ankle in the fall, and could not stand. I was seized as a house-breaker; and to exonerate myself of a greater crime, I had to accuse myself of a less. I made known who I was, and why I came there. Alas! the varlets knew it already, and were only amusing themselves at my expense. My perfidious Muse had been playing me one of her slippery tricks. The old curmudgeon of a father had found my sonnets and acrostics hid away in holes and corners of his shop; he had no taste for poetry like his daughter, and had instituted a rigorous though silent observation. He had moused upon our letters, detected our plans, and prepared everything for my reception. Thus was I ever doomed to be led into scrapes by the

Muse. Let no man henceforth carry on a secret amour in poetry!

The old man's ire was in some measure appeased by the pommelling of my head and the anguish of my sprain; so he did not put me to death on the spot. He was even humane enough to furnish a shutter, on which I was carried back to college like a wounded warrior. The porter was roused to admit me. The college gate was thrown open for my entry. The affair was blazed about the next morning, and became the joke of the college from the buttery to the hall.

I had leisure to repent during several weeks' confinement by my sprain, which I passed in translating Boethius's "Consolations of Philosophy." I received a most tender and ill-spelled letter from my mistress, who had been sent to a relation in Coventry. She protested her innocence of my misfortune, and vowed to be true to me "till deth." I took no notice of the letter, for I was cured for the present, both of love and poetry. Women, however, are more constant in their attachments than men, whatever philosophers may say to the contrary. I am assured that she actually remained faithful to her vow for several months; but she had to deal with a cruel father, whose heart was as hard as the knob of his cane He was not to be touched by tears nor poetry, but absolutely compelled her to marry a reputable young tradesman, who made her a happy woman in spite of herself and of all the rules of romance, and, what is more, the

mother of several children. They are at this very day a thriving couple, and keep a snug corner-shop just opposite the figure of Peeping Tom, at Coventry.

I will not fatigue you by any more details of my studies at Oxford; though they were not always as severe as these, nor did I always pay as dear for my lessons. To be brief, then, I lived on in my usual miscellaneous manner, gradually getting knowledge of good and evil, until I had attained my twenty-first year. I had scarcely come of age when I heard of the sudden death of my father. The shock was severe, for though he had never treated me with much kindness, still he was my father, and at his death I felt alone in the world.

I returned home, and found myself the solitary master of the paternal mansion. A crowd of gloomy feelings came thronging upon me. It was a place that always sobered me, and brought me to reflection; now especially; it looked so deserted and melancholy. I entered the little breakfasting-room. There were my father's whip and spurs, hanging by the fireplace; the "Stud-Book," "Sporting Magazine," and "Racing Calendar," his only reading. His favorite spaniel lay on the hearth-rug. The poor animal, who had never before noticed me, now came fondling about me, licked my hand, then looked round the room, whined, wagged his tail slightly, and gazed wistfully in my face. I felt the full force of the appeal. "Poor Dash," said I, "we are both alone in the

world, with nobody to care for us, and will take care of one another."—The dog never quitted me afterwards.

I could not go into my mother's room—my heart swelled when I passed within sight of the door. Her portrait hung in the parlor, just over the place where she used to sit. As I cast my eyes on it, I thought that it looked at me with tenderness, and I burst into tears. I was a careless dog, it is true, hardened a little, perhaps, by living in public schools, and buffeting about among strangers, who cared nothing for me; but the recollection of a mother's tenderness was overcoming.

I was not of an age or a temperament to be long depressed. There was a reaction in my system, that always brought me up again after every pressure; and, indeed, my spirits were always most buoyant after a temporary prostration. I settled the concerns of the estate as soon as possible; realized my property, which was not very considerable, but which appeared a vast deal to me, having a poetical eye that magnified everything; and finding myself, at the end of a few months, free of all further business or restraint, I determined to go to London and enjoy myself. Why should I not?—I was young, animated, joyous; had plenty of funds for present pleasures, and my uncle's estate in the perspective. Let those mope at college, and pore over books, thought I, who have their way to make in the world; it would be ridiculous drudgery in a youth of my expectations. Away to London, therefore, I rattled in a tandem, determined to take the

town gayly. I passed through several of the villages where I had played the Jack Pudding a few years before; and I visited the scenes of many of my adventures and follies merely from that feeling of melancholy pleasure which we have in stepping again the footprints of foregone existence, even when they have passed among weeds and briers. I made a circuit in the latter part of my journey, so as to take in West End and Hampstead, the scenes of my last dramatic exploit, and of the battle royal of the booth. As I drove along the ridge of Hampstead Hill, by Jack Straw's Castle, I paused at the spot where Columbine and I had sat down so disconsolately in our ragged finery, and had looked dubiously on London. I almost expected to see her again, standing on the hill's brink, "like Niobe, all tears;"—mournful as Babylon in ruins!

"Poor Columbine!" said I, with a heavy sigh, "thou wert a gallant, generous girl—a true woman;—faithful to the distressed, and ready to sacrifice thyself in the cause of worthless man!"

I tried to whistle off the recollection of her, for there was always something of self-reproach with it. I drove gayly along the road, enjoying the stare of hostlers and stable-boys, as I managed my horses knowingly down the steep street of Hampstead; when, just at the skirts of the village, one of the traces of my leader came loose. I pulled up, and as the animal was restive, and my servant a bungler, I called for assistance to the robustious

master of a snug ale-house, who stood at his door with a tankard in his hand. He came readily to assist me, followed by his wife, with her bosom half open, a child in her arms, and two more at her heels. I stared for a moment, as if doubting my eyes. I could not be mistaken: in the fat, beer-blown landlord of the ale-house I recollected my old rival Harlequin, and in his slattern spouse the once trim and dimpling Columbine.

The change of my looks from youth to manhood, and the change in my circumstances, prevented them from recognizing me. They could not suspect in the dashing young buck, fashionably dressed and driving his own equipage, the painted beau, with old peaked hat, and long, flimsy, sky-blue coat. My heart yearned with kindness towards Columbine, and I was glad to see her establishment a thriving one. As soon as the harness was adjusted, I tossed a small purse of gold into her ample bosom; and then, pretending to give my horses a hearty cut of the whip, I made the lash curl with a whistling about the sleek sides of ancient Harlequin. The horses dashed off like lightning, and I was whirled out of sight before either of the parties could get over their surprise at my liberal donations. I have always considered this as one of the greatest proofs of my poetical genius; it was distributing poetical justice in perfection.

I now entered London *en cavalier*, and became a blood upon town. I took fashionable lodgings, in the West

End; employed the first tailor; frequented the regular lounges; gambled a little; lost my money good-humoredly; and gained a number of fashionable, good-for-nothing acquaintances. I gained some reputation also for a man of science, having become an expert boxer in the course of my studies at Oxford. I was distinguished, therefore, among the gentlemen of the Fancy; became hand and glove with certain boxing noblemen, and was the admiration of the Fives Court. A gentleman's science, however, is apt to get him into bad scrapes; he is too prone to play the knight-errant, and to pick up quarrels which less scientifical gentlemen would quietly avoid. I undertook one day to punish the insolence of a porter. He was a Hercules of a fellow, but then I was so secure in my science! I gained the victory of course. The porter pocketed his humiliation, bound up his broken head, and went about his business as unconcernedly as though nothing had happened; while I went to bed with my victory, and did not dare to show my battered face for a fortnight: by which I discovered that a gentleman may have the worst of the battle even when victorious.

I am naturally a philosopher, and no one can moralize better after a misfortune has taken place; so I lay on my bed and moralized on this sorry ambition, which levels the gentleman with the clown. I know it is the opinion of many sages, who have thought deeply on these matters, that the noble science of boxing keeps up the bull-

dog courage of the nation; and far be it from me to decry the advantage of becoming a nation of bull-dogs; but I now saw clearly that it was calculated to keep up the breed of English ruffians. "What is the Fives Court," said I to myself, as I turned uncomfortably in bed, "but a college of scoundrelism, where every bully-ruffian in the land may gain a fellowship? What is the slang language of the Fancy but a jargon by which fools and knaves commune and understand each other, and enjoy a kind of superiority over the uninitiated? What is a boxing-match but an arena, where the noble and the illustrious are jostled into familiarity with the infamous and the vulgar? What, in fact, is the Fancy itself, but a chain of easy communication, extending from the peer down to the pickpocket, through the medium of which a man of rank may find he has shaken hands, at three removes, with the murderer on the gibbet?—

"Enough!" ejaculated I, thoroughly convinced through the force of my philosophy, and the pain of my bruises,—"I'll have nothing more to do with the Fancy." So when I had recovered from my victory, I turned my attention to softer themes, and became a devoted admirer of the ladies. Had I had more industry and ambition in my nature, I might have worked my way to the very height of fashion, as I saw many laborious gentlemen doing around me. But it is a toilsome, an anxious, and an unhappy life; there are few things so sleepless and miserable as your cultivators of fashionable smiles. I was

quite content with that kind of society which forms the frontiers of fashion, and may be easily taken possession of. I found it a light, easy, productive soil. I had but to go about and sow visiting-cards, and I reaped a whole harvest of invitations. Indeed, my figure and address were by no means against me. It was whispered, too, among the young ladies, that I was prodigiously clever, and wrote poetry; and the old ladies had ascertained that I was a young gentleman of good family, handsome fortune, and "great expectations."

I now was carried away by the hurry of gay life, so intoxicating to a young man, and which a man of poetical temperament enjoys so highly on his first tasting of it; that rapid variety of sensations; that whirl of brilliant objects; that succession of pungent pleasures! I had no time for thought. I only felt. I never attempted to write poetry; my poetry seemed all to go off by transpiration. I lived poetry; it was all a poetical dream to me. A mere sensualist knows nothing of the delights of a splendid metropolis. He lives in a round of animal gratifications and heartless habits. But to a young man of poetical feelings, it is an ideal world, a scene of enchantment and delusion; his imagination is in perpetual excitement, and gives a spiritual zest to every pleasure.

A season of town life, however, somewhat sobered me of my intoxication; or rather I was rendered more serious by one of my old complaints—I fell in love. It was with a very pretty, though a very haughty fair one,

who had come to London under the care of an old maiden aunt to enjoy the pleasures of a winter in town, and to get married. There was not a doubt of her commanding a choice of lovers; for she had long been the belle of a little cathedral city, and one of the poets of the place had absolutely celebrated her beauty in a copy of Latin verses. The most extravagant anticipations were formed by her friends of the sensation she would produce. It was feared by some that she might be precipitate in her choice, and take up with some inferior title. The aunt was determined nothing should gain her under a lord.

Alas! with all her charms, the young lady lacked the one thing needful—she had no money. So she waited in vain for duke, marquis, or earl, to throw himself at her feet. As the season waned, so did the lady's expectations; when, just towards the close, I made my advances.

I was most favorably received by both the young lady and her aunt. It is true, I had no title; but then such great expectations. A marked preference was immediately shown me over two rivals, the younger son of a needy baronet, and a captain of dragoons on half-pay. I did not absolutely take the field in form, for I was determined not to be precipitate; but I drove my equipage frequently through the street in which she lived, and was always sure to see her at the window, generally with a book in her hand. I resumed my knack at rhyming, and sent her a long copy of verses; anonymously, to be sure,

but she knew my handwriting. Both aunt and niece, however, displayed the most delightful ignorance on the subject. The young lady showed them to me; wondered who they could be written by; and declared there was nothing in this world she loved so much as poetry; while the maiden aunt would put her pinching spectacles on her nose, and read them, with blunders in sense and sound, excruciating to an author's ears; protesting there was nothing equal to them in the whole Elegant Extracts.

The fashionable season closed without my adventuring to make a declaration, though I certainly had encouragement. I was not perfectly sure that I had effected a lodgment in the young lady's heart; and, to tell the truth, the aunt overdid her part, and was a little too extravagant in her liking of me. I knew that maiden aunts were not to be captivated by the mere personal merits of their nieces' admirers; and I wanted to ascertain how much of all this favor I owed to driving an equipage, and having great expectations.

I had received many hints how charming their native place was during the summer months; what pleasant society they had; and what beautiful drives about the neighborhood. They had not, therefore, returned home long, before I made my appearance in dashing style, driving down the principal street. The very next morning I was seen at prayers, seated in the same pew with the reigning belle. Questions were whispered about the

aisles, after service, "Who is he?" and "What is he?" And the replies were as usual, "A young gentleman of good family and fortune, and great expectations."

I was much struck with the peculiarities of this reverend little place. A cathedral, with its dependencies and regulations, presents a picture of other times, and of a different order of things. It is a rich relic of a more poetical age. There still linger about it the silence and solemnity of the cloister. In the present instance especially, where the cathedral was large, and the town small, its influence was the more apparent. The solemn pomp of the service, performed twice a day, with the grand intonations of the organ, and the voices of the choir swelling through the magnificent pile, diffused, as it were, a perpetual Sabbath over the place. This routine of solemn ceremony continually going on, independent, as it were, of the world; this daily offering of melody and praise, ascending like incense from the altar, had a powerful effect upon my imagination.

The aunt introduced me to her coterie, formed of families connected with the cathedral, and others of moderate fortune, but high respectability, who had nestled themselves under the wings of the cathedral to enjoy good society at moderate expense. It was a highly aristocratical little circle; scrupulous in its intercourse with others, and jealously cautious about admitting anything common or unclean.

It seemed as if the courtesies of the old school had

taken refuge here. There were continual interchanges of civilities, and of small presents of fruits and delicacies, and of complimentary crow-quill billets; for in a quiet, well-bred community like this, living entirely at ease, little duties, and little amusements, and little civilities, filled up the day. I have seen, in the midst of a warm day, a corpulent, powdered footman, issuing from the iron gateway of a stately mansion, and traversing the little place with an air of mighty import, bearing a small tart on a large silver salver.

Their evening amusements were sober and primitive. They assembled at a moderate hour; the young ladies played music, and the old ladies, whist; and at an early hour they dispersed. There was no parade on these social occasions. Two or three old sedan chairs were in constant activity, though the greater part made their exit in clogs and pattens, with a footman or waiting-maid carrying a lantern in advance; and long before midnight the clank of pattens and gleam of lanterns about the quiet little place told that the evening party had dissolved.

Still I did not feel myself altogether so much at my ease as I had anticipated considering the smallness of the place. I found it very different from other country places, and that it was not so easy to make a dash there. Sinner that I was! the very dignity and decorum of the little community was rebuking to me. I feared my past idleness and folly would rise in judgment against me. I stood in awe of the dignitaries of the cathedral, whom I

saw mingling familiarly in society. I became nervous on this point. The creak of a prebendary's shoes, sounding from one end of a quiet street to another, was appalling to me; and the sight of a shovel hat was sufficient at any time to check me in the midst of my boldest poetical soarings.

And then the good aunt could not be quiet, but would cry me up for a genius, and extol my poetry to every one. So long as she confined this to the ladies it did well enough, because they were able to feel and appreciate poetry of the new romantic school. Nothing would content the good lady, however, but she must read my verses to a prebendary, who had long been the undoubted critic of the place. He was a thin, delicate old gentleman, of mild, polished manners, steeped to the lips in classic lore, and not easily put in a heat by any hot-blooded poetry of the day. He listened to my most fervid thoughts and fervid words without a glow; shook his head with a smile, and condemned them as not being according to Horace, as not being legitimate poetry.

Several old ladies, who had heretofore been my admirers, shook their heads at hearing this: they could not think of praising any poetry that was not according to Horace; and as to anything illegitimate, it was not to be countenanced in good society. Thanks to my stars, however, I had youth and novelty on my side: so the young ladies persisted in admiring my poetry in despite of Horace and illegitimacy.

I consoled myself with the good opinion of the young ladies, whom I had always found to be the best judges of poetry. As to these old scholars, said I, they are apt to be chilled by being steeped in the cold fountains of the classics. Still I felt that I was losing ground, and that it was necessary to bring matters to a point. Just at this time there was a public ball, attended by the best society of the place, and by the gentry of the neighborhood: I took great pains with my toilet on the occasion, and I had never looked better. I had determined that night to make my grand assault on the heart of the young lady, to battle it with all my forces, and the next morning to demand a surrender in due form.

I entered the ball-room amidst a buzz and flutter, which generally took place among the young ladies on my appearance. I was in fine spirits; for, to tell the truth, I had exhilarated myself by a cheerful glass of wine on the occasion. I talked, and rattled, and said a thousand silly things, slap-dash, with all the confidence of a man sure of his auditors,—and everything had its effect.

In the midst of my triumph I observed a little knot gathering together in the upper part of the room. By degrees it increased. A tittering broke out here and there, and glances were cast round at me, and then there would be fresh tittering. Some of the young ladies would hurry away to distant parts of the room, and whisper to their friends. Wherever they went, there was still this tittering and glancing at me. I did not

know what to make of all this. I looked at myself from head to foot, and peeped at my back in a glass, to see if anything was odd about my person; any awkward exposure, any whimsical tag hanging out;—no—everything was right—I was a perfect picture. I determined that it must be some choice saying of mine that was bandied about in this knot of merry beauties, and I determined to enjoy one of my good things in the rebound. I stepped gently, therefore, up the room, smiling at every one as I passed, who, I must say, all smiled and tittered in return. I approached the group, smirking and perking my chin, like a man who is full of pleasant feeling, and sure of being well received. The cluster of little belles opened as I advanced.

Heavens and earth! whom should I perceive in the midst of them but my early and tormenting flame, the everlasting Sacharissa! She was grown, it is true, into the full beauty of womanhood; but showed, by the provoking merriment of her countenance, that she perfectly recollected me, and the ridiculous flagellations of which she had twice been the cause.

I saw at once the exterminating cloud of ridicule bursting over me. My crest fell. The flame of love went suddenly out, or was extinguished by overwhelming shame. How I got down the room I know not; I fancied every one tittering at me. Just as I reached the door, I caught a glance of my mistress and her aunt listening to the whispers of Sacharissa, the old lady raising her hands

and eyes, and the face of the young one lighted up, as I imagined, with scorn ineffable. I paused to see no more, but made two steps from the top of the stairs to the bottom. The next morning, before sunrise, I beat a retreat, and did not feel the blushes cool from my tingling cheeks, until I had lost sight of the old towers of the cathedral.

I now returned to town thoughtful and crestfallen. My money was nearly spent, for I had lived freely and without calculation. The dream of love was over, and the reign of pleasure at an end. I determined to retrench while I had yet a trifle left; so selling my equipage and horses for half their value, I quietly put the money in my pocket, and turned pedestrian. I had not a doubt that, with my great expectations, I could at any time raise funds, either on usury or by borrowing; but I was principled against both, and resolved by strict economy to make my slender purse hold out until my uncle should give up the ghost, or rather the estate. I stayed at home therefore and read, and would have written, but I had already suffered too much from my poetical productions, which had generally involved me in some ridiculous scrape. I gradually acquired a rusty look, and had a straitened money-borrowing air, upon which the world began to shy me. I have never felt disposed to quarrel with the world for its conduct; it has always used me well. When I have been flush and gay, and disposed for society, it has caressed me; and when I have been pinched and reduced, and wished to be alone, why, it has

left me alone; and what more could a man desire? Take my word for it, this world is a more obliging world than people generally represent it.

Well, sir, in the midst of my retrenchment, my retirement, and my studiousness, I received news that my uncle was dangerously ill. I hastened on the wings of an heir's affections to receive his dying breath and his last testament. I found him attended by his faithful valet, old Iron John; by the woman who occasionally worked about the house, and by the foxy-headed boy, young Orson, whom I had occasionally hunted about the park. Iron John gasped a kind of asthmatical salutation as I entered the room, and received me with something almost like a smile of welcome. The woman sat blubbering at the foot of the bed; and the foxy-headed Orson, who had now grown up to be a lubberly lout, stood gazing in stupid vacancy at a distance.

My uncle lay stretched upon his back. The chamber was without fire, or any of the comforts of a sick-room. The cobwebs flaunted from the ceiling. The tester was covered with dust, and the curtains were tattered. From underneath the bed peeped out one end of his strong box. Against the wainscot were suspended rusty blunderbusses, horse-pistols, and a cut-and-thrust sword, with which he had fortified his room to defend his life and treasure. He had employed no physician during his illness; and from the scanty relics lying on the table, seemed almost to have denied himself the assistance of a cook.

When I entered the room, he was lying motionless; his eyes fixed and his mouth open: at the first look I thought him a corpse. The noise of my entrance made him turn his head. At the sight of me a ghastly smile came over his face, and his glazing eye gleamed with satisfaction. It was the only smile he had ever given me, and it went to my heart. "Poor old man!" thought I, "why should you force me to leave you thus desolate, when I see that my presence has the power to cheer you?"

"Nephew," said he, after several efforts, and in a low gasping voice,—"I am glad you are come. I shall now die with satisfaction. Look," said he, raising his withered hand, and pointing,—"look in that box on the table: you will find that I have not forgotten you."

I pressed his hand to my heart, and the tears stood in my eyes. I sat down by his bedside, and watched him, but he never spoke again. My presence, however, gave him evident satisfaction; for every now and then, as he looked to me, a vague smile would come over his visage, and he would feebly point to the sealed box on the table. As the day wore away, his life appeared to wear away with it. Towards sunset his head sank on the bed, and lay motionless, his eyes grew glazed, his mouth remained open, and thus he gradually died.

I could not but feel shocked at this absolute extinction of my kindred. I dropped a tear of real sorrow over this strange old man, who had thus reserved the smile of kindness to his death-bed,—like an evening sun after a

gloomy day, just shining out to set in darkness. Leaving the corpse in charge of the domestics, I retired for the night.

It was a rough night. The winds seemed as if singing my uncle's requiem about the mansion, and the bloodhounds howled without, as if they knew of the death of their old master. Iron John almost grudged me the tallow candle to burn in my apartment, and light up its dreariness, so accustomed had he been to starveling economy. I could not sleep. The recollection of my uncle's dying-scene, and the dreary sounds about the house, affected my mind. These, however, were succeeded by plans for the future, and I lay awake the greater part of the night, indulging the poetical anticipation how soon I should make these old walls ring with cheerful life, and restore the hospitality of my mother's ancestors.

My uncle's funeral was decent, but private. I knew that nobody respected his memory, and I was determined none should be summoned to sneer over his funeral, and make merry at his grave. He was buried in the church of the neighboring village, though it was not the burying-place of his race; but he had expressly enjoined that he should not be buried with his family; he had quarrelled with most of them when living, and he carried his resentments even into the grave.

I defrayed the expenses of his funeral out of my own purse, that I might have done with the undertakers at

once, and clear the ill-omened birds from the premises. I invited the parson of the parish, and the lawyer from the village, to attend at the house the next morning, and hear the reading of the will. I treated them to an excellent breakfast, a profusion that had not been seen at the house for many a year. As soon as the breakfast things were removed, I summoned Iron John, the woman, and the boy, for I was particular in having every one present and proceeding regularly. The box was placed on the table—all was silence—I broke the seal—raised the lid, and beheld—not the will—but my accursed poem of Doubting Castle and Giant Despair!

Could any mortal have conceived that this old withered man, so taciturn, and apparently so lost to feeling, could have treasured up for years the thoughtless pleasantry of a boy, to punish him with such cruel ingenuity? I now could account for his dying smile, the only one he had ever given me. He had been a grave man all his life, it was strange that he should die in the enjoyment of a joke, and it was hard that that joke should be at my expense.

The lawyer and the parson seemed at a loss to comprehend the matter. "Here must be some mistake," said the lawyer; "there is no will here."

"Oh!" said Iron John, creaking forth his rusty jaws, "if it is a will you are looking for, I believe I can find one."

He retired with the same singular smile with which he

had greeted me on my arrival, and which I now apprehended boded me no good. In a little while he returned with a will perfect at all points, properly signed and sealed, and witnessed and worded with horrible correctness; in which the deceased left large legacies to Iron John and his daughter, and the residue of his fortune to the foxy-headed boy, who, to my utter astonishment, was his son by this very woman; he having married her privately, and, as I verily believe, for no other purpose than to have an heir, and so balk my father and his issue of the inheritance. There was one little proviso, in which he mentioned, that, having discovered his nephew to have a pretty turn for poetry, he presumed. he had no occasion for wealth; he recommended him, however, to the patronage of his heir, and requested that he might have a garret, rent-free, in Doubting Castle.

GRAVE REFLECTIONS OF A DISAPPOINTED MAN.

MR. BUCKTHORNE had paused at the death of his uncle, and the downfall of his great expectations, which formed, as he said, an epoch in his history; and it was not until some little time afterwards, and in a very sober mood, that he resumed his party-colored narrative.

After leaving the remains of my defunct uncle, said he, when the gate closed between me and what was once to have been mine, I felt thrust out naked into the world, and completely abandoned to fortune. What was to become of me? I had been brought up to nothing but expectations, and they had all been disappointed. I had no relations to look to for counsel or assistance. The world seemed all to have died away from me. Wave after wave of relationship had ebbed off, and I was left a mere hulk upon the strand. I am not apt to be greatly cast down, but at this time I felt sadly disheartened. I could not realize my situation, nor form a conjecture how I was to get forward. I was now to endeavor to make money. The idea was new and strange to me. It was

like being asked to discover the philosopher's stone. I had never thought about money otherwise than to put my hand into my pocket and find it; or if there were none there, to wait until a new supply came from home. I had considered life as a mere space of time to be filled up with enjoyments; but to have it portioned out into long hours and days of toil, merely that I might gain bread to give me strength to toil on—to labor but for the purpose of perpetuating a life of labor, was new and appalling to me. This may appear a very simple matter to some; but it will be understood by every unlucky wight in my predicament, who has had the misfortune of being born to great expectations.

I passed several days in rambling about the scenes of my boyhood; partly because I absolutely did not know what to do with myself, and partly because I did not know that I should ever see them again. I clung to them as one clings to a wreck, though he knows he must eventually cast himself loose and swim for his life. I sat down on a little hill within sight of my paternal home, but I did not venture to approach it, for I felt compunction at the thoughtlessness with which I had dissipated my patrimony; yet was I to blame when I had the rich possessions of my curmudgeon of an uncle in expectation?

The new possessor of the place was making great alterations. The house was almost rebuilt. The trees which stood about it were cut down; my mother's flower-garden was thrown into a lawn,—all was undergoing a

change. I turned my back upon it with a sigh, and rambled to another part of the country.

How thoughtful a little adversity makes one! As I came within sight of the schoolhouse where I had so often been flogged in the cause of wisdom, you would hardly have recognized the truant boy, who, but a few years since, had eloped so heedlessly from its walls. I leaned over the paling of the play-ground, and watched the scholars at their games, and looked to see if there might not be some urchin among them like I was once, full of gay dreams about life and the world. The play-ground seemed smaller than when I used to sport about it. The house and park, too, of the neighboring squire, the father of the cruel Sacharissa, had shrunk in size and diminished in magnificence. The distant hills no longer appeared so far off, and, alas! no longer awakened ideas of a fairy land beyond.

As I was rambling pensively through a neighboring meadow, in which I had many a time gathered primroses, I met the very pedagogue who had been the tyrant and dread of my boyhood. I had sometimes vowed to myself, when suffering under his rod, that I would have my revenge if ever I met him when I had grown to be a man. The time had come; but I had no disposition to keep my vow. The few years which had matured me into a vigorous man had shrunk him into decrepitude. He appeared to have had a paralytic stroke. I looked at him, and wondered that this poor helpless mortal could

have been an object of terror to me; that I should have watched with anxiety the glance of that failing eye, or dreaded the power of that trembling hand. He tottered feebly along the path, and had some difficulty in getting over a stile. I ran and assisted him. He looked at me with surprise, but did not recognize me, and made a low bow of humility and thanks. I had no disposition to make myself known, for I felt that I had nothing to boast of. The pains he had taken, and the pains he had inflicted, had been equally useless. His repeated predictions were fully verified, and I felt that little Jack Buckthorne, the idle boy, had grown to be a very good-for-nothing man.

This is all very comfortless detail; but as I have told you of my follies, it is meet that I show you how for once I was schooled for them. The most thoughtless of mortals will some time or other have his day of gloom, when he will be compelled to reflect.

I felt on this occasion as if I had a kind of penance to perform, and I made a pilgrimage in expiation of my past levity. Having passed a night at Leamington, I set off by a private path, which leads up a hill through a grove and across quiet fields, till I came to the small village, or rather hamlet, of Lenington. I sought the village church. It is an old low edifice of gray stone, on the brow of a small hill, looking over fertile fields, towards where the proud towers of Warwick castle lift themselves against the distant horizon.

A part of the churchyard is shaded by large trees. Under one of them my mother lay buried. You have no doubt thought me a light, heartless being. I thought myself so; but there are moments of adversity which let us into some feelings of our nature to which we might otherwise remain perpetual strangers.

I sought my mother's grave; the weeds were already matted over it, and the tombstone was half hid among nettles. I cleared them away, and they stung my hands; but I was heedless of the pain, for my heart ached too severely. I sat down on the grave, and read over and over again the epitaph on the stone.

It was simple,—but it was true. I had written it myself. I had tried to write a poetical epitaph, but in vain; my feelings refused to utter themselves in rhyme. My heart had gradually been filling during my lonely wanderings; it was now charged to the brim, and overflowed. I sank upon the grave, and buried my face in the tall grass, and wept like a child. Yes, I wept in manhood upon the grave, as I had in infancy upon the bosom of my mother. Alas! how little do we appreciate a mother's tenderness while living! how heedless are we in youth of all her anxieties and kindness! But when she is dead and gone; when the cares and coldness of the world come withering to our hearts; when we find how hard it is to meet with true sympathy; how few love us for ourselves; how few will befriend us in our misfortunes; then it is that we think of the mother we have

lost. It is true I had always loved my mother, even in my most heedless days; but I felt how inconsiderate and ineffectual had been my love. My heart melted as I retraced the days of infancy, when I was led by a mother's hand, and rocked to sleep in a mother's arms, and was without care or sorrow. "O my mother!" exclaimed I, burying my face again in the grass of the grave; "oh that I were once more by your side; sleeping never to wake again on the cares and troubles of this world."

I am not naturally of a morbid temperament, and the violence of my emotion gradually exhausted itself. It was a hearty, honest, natural discharge of grief which had been slowly accumulating, and gave me wonderful relief. I rose from the grave as if I had been offering up a sacrifice, and I felt as if that sacrifice had been accepted.

I sat down again on the grass, and plucked, one by one, the weeds from her grave: the tears trickled more slowly down my cheeks, and ceased to be bitter. It was a comfort to think that she had died before sorrow and poverty came upon her child and all his great expectations were blasted.

I leaned my cheek upon my hand, and looked upon the landscape. Its quiet beauty soothed me. The whistle of a peasant from an adjoining field came cheerily to my ear. I seemed to respire hope and comfort with the free air that whispered through the leaves, and played lightly with my hair, and dried the tears upon my cheek.

A lark, rising from the field before me, and leaving as it were a stream of song behind him as he rose, lifted my fancy with him. He hovered in the air just above the place where the towers of Warwick castle marked the horizon, and seemed as if fluttering with delight at his own melody. "Surely," thought I, "if there was such a thing as transmigration of souls, this might be taken for some poet let loose from earth, but still revelling in song, and carolling about fair fields and lordly towers."

At this moment the long-forgotten feeling of poetry rose within me. A thought sprang at once into my mind.—"I will become an author!" said I. "I have hitherto indulged in poetry as a pleasure, and it has brought me nothing but pain; let me try what it will do when I cultivate it with devotion as a pursuit."

The resolution thus suddenly aroused within me heaved a load from off my heart. I felt a confidence in it from the very place where it was formed. It seemed as though my mother's spirit whispered it to me from the grave. "I will henceforth," said I, "endeavor to be all that she fondly imagined me. I will endeavor to act as if she were witness of my actions; I will endeavor to acquit myself in such a manner that, when I revisit her grave, there may at least be no compunctious bitterness with my tears."

I bowed down and kissed the turf in solemn attestation of my vow. I plucked some primroses that were growing there, and laid them next my heart. I left the

churchyard with my spirit once more lifted up, and set out a third time for London in the character of an author.——

Here my companion made a pause and I waited in anxious suspense, hoping to have a whole volume of literary life unfolded to me. He seemed, however, to have sunk into a fit of pensive musing, and when, after some time, I gently roused him by a question or two as to his literary career,

"No," said he, smiling: "over that part of my story I wish to leave a cloud. Let the mysteries of the craft rest sacred for me. Let those who have never ventured into the republic of letters still look upon it as a fairy land. Let them suppose the author the very being they picture him from his works—I am not the man to mar their illusion. I am not the man to hint, while one is admiring the silken web of Persia, that it has been spun from the entrails of a miserable worm."

"Well," said I, "if you will tell me nothing of your literary history, let me know at least if you have had any further intelligence from Doubting Castle."

"Willingly," replied he, "though I have but little to communicate."

THE BOOBY SQUIRE.

LONG time elapsed, said Buckthorne, without my receiving any accounts of my cousin and his estate. Indeed, I felt so much soreness on the subject, that I wished, if possible, to shut it from my thoughts. At length, chance took me to that part of the country, and I could not refrain from making some inquiries.

I learnt that my cousin had grown up ignorant, self-willed, and clownish. His ignorance and clownishness had prevented his mingling with the neighboring gentry: in spite of his great fortune, he had been unsuccessful in an attempt to gain the hand of the daughter of the parson, and had at length shrunk into the limits of such a society as a mere man of wealth can gather in a country neighborhood.

He kept horses and hounds, and a roaring table, at which were collected the loose livers of the country round, and the shabby gentlemen of a village in the vicinity. When he could get no other company, he would smoke and drink with his own servants, who in turn fleeced and despised him. Still, with all his appa-

rent prodigality, he had a leaven of the old man in him, which showed that he was his trueborn son. He lived far within his income, was vulgar in his expenses, and penurious in many points wherein a gentleman would be extravagant. His house-servants were obliged occasionally to work on his estate, and part of the pleasure-grounds were ploughed up and devoted to husbandry.

His table, though plentiful, was coarse; his liquors were strong and bad; and more ale and whiskey were expended in his establishment than generous wine. He was loud and arrogant at his own table, and exacted a rich man's homage from his vulgar and obsequious guests.

As to Iron John, his old grandfather, he had grown impatient of the tight hand his own grandson kept over him, and quarrelled with him soon after he came to the estate. The old man had retired to the neighboring village, where he lived on the legacy of his late master, in a small cottage, and was as seldom seen out of it as a rat out of his hole in daylight.

The cub, like Caliban, seemed to have an instinctive attachment to his mother. She resided with him, but, from long habit, she acted more as a servant than as a mistress of the mansion; for she toiled in all the domestic drudgery, and was oftener in the kitchen than the parlor. Such was the information which I collected of my rival cousin, who had so unexpectedly elbowed me out of my expectations.

I now felt an irresistible hankering to pay a visit to this scene of my boyhood, and to get a peep at the odd kind of life that was passing within the mansion of my maternal ancestors. I determined to do so in disguise. My booby cousin had never seen enough of me to be very familiar with my countenance, and a few years make a great difference between youth and manhood. I understood he was a breeder of cattle, and proud of his stock; I dressed myself therefore as a substantial farmer, and with the assistance of a red scratch that came low down on my forehead, made a complete change in my physiognomy.

It was past three o'clock when I arrived at the gate of the park, and was admitted by an old woman who was washing in a dilapidated building, which had once been a porter's lodge. I advanced up the remains of a noble avenue, many of the trees of which had been cut down and sold for timber. The grounds were in scarcely better keeping than during my uncle's lifetime. The grass was overgrown with weeds, and the trees wanted pruning and clearing of dead branches. Cattle were grazing about the lawns, and ducks and geese swimming in the fish-ponds. The road to the house bore very few traces of carriage-wheels, as my cousin received few visitors but such as came on foot or horseback, and never used a carriage himself. Once, indeed, as I was told, he had the old family carriage drawn out from among the dust and cobwebs of the coach-house, and furbished up,

and driven, with his mother, to the village church, to take formal possession of the family pew; but there was such hooting and laughing after them, as they passed through the village, and such giggling and bantering about the church-door, that the pageant had never made a reappearance.

As I approached the house, a legion of whelps sallied out, barking at me, accompanied by the low howling, rather than barking, of two old worn-out blood-hounds, which I recognized for the ancient lifeguards of my uncle. The house had still a neglected random appearance, though much altered for the better since my last visit. Several of the windows were broken and patched up with boards, and others had been bricked up to save taxes. I observed smoke, however, rising from the chimneys, a phenomenon rarely witnessed in the ancient establishment. On passing that part of the house where the dining-room was situated, I heard the sound of boisterous merriment, where three or four voices were talking at once, and oaths and laughter were horribly mingled.

The uproar of the dogs had brought a servant to the door, a tall hard-fisted country clown, with a livery coat put over the under garments of a ploughman. I requested to see the master of the house, but was told that he was at dinner with some "gemmen" of the neighborhood. I made known my business, and sent in to know if I might talk with the master about his cattle, for I felt a great desire to have a peep at him in his orgies.

Word was returned that he was engaged with company, and could not attend to business, but that if I would step in and take a drink of something, I was heartily welcome. I accordingly entered the hall, where whips and hats of all kinds and shapes were lying on an oaken table; two or three clownish servants were lounging about; everything had a look of confusion and carelessness.

The apartments through which I passed had the same air of departed gentility and sluttish housekeeping. The once rich curtains were faded and dusty; the furniture greased and tarnished. On entering the dining-room, I found a number of odd, vulgar-looking, rustic gentlemen, seated round a table, on which were bottles, decanters, tankards, pipes, and tobacco. Several dogs were lying about the room, or sitting and watching their masters, and one was gnawing a bone under a side-table. The master of the feast sat at the head of the board. He was greatly altered. He had grown thickset and rather gummy, with a fiery foxy head of hair. There was a singular mixture of foolishness, arrogance, and conceit in his countenance. He was dressed in a vulgarly fine style, with leather breeches, a red waistcoat, and green coat, and was evidently, like his guests, a little flushed with drinking, The whole company stared at me with a whimsical muzzy look, like men whose senses were a little obfuscated by beer rather than wine.

My cousin, (God forgive me! the appellation sticks in

my throat), my cousin invited me with awkward civility, or, as he intended it, condescension, to sit to the table and drink. We talked, as usual, about the weather, the crops, politics, and hard times. My cousin was a loud politician, and evidently accustomed to talk without contradiction at his own table. He was amazingly loyal, and talked of standing by the throne to the last guinea, "as every gentleman of fortune should do." The village exciseman, who was half asleep, could just ejaculate "very true" to everything he said. The conversation turned upon cattle; he boasted of his breed, his mode of crossing it, and of the general management of his estate. This unluckily drew out a history of the place and of the family. He spoke of my late uncle with the greatest irreverence, which I could easily forgive. He mentioned my name, and my blood began to boil. He described my frequent visits to my uncle, when I was a lad, and I found the varlet, even at that time, imp as he was, had known that he was to inherit the estate. He described the scene of my uncle's death, and the opening of the will, with a degree of coarse humor that I had not expected from him; and, vexed as I was, I could not help joining in the laugh, for I have always relished a joke, even though made at my own expense. He went on to speak of my various pursuits, my strolling freak; and that somewhat nettled me; at length he talked of my parents. He ridiculed my father; I stomached even that, though with great difficulty. He mentioned my mother

with a sneer, and in an instant he lay sprawling at my feet.

Here a tumult succeeded: the table was nearly overturned; bottles, glasses, and tankards rolled crashing and clattering about the floor. The company seized hold of both of us, to keep us from doing any further mischief. I struggled to get loose, for I was boiling with fury. My cousin defied me to strip and fight him on the lawn. I agreed, for I felt the strength of a giant in me, and I longed to pommel him soundly.

Away then we were borne. A ring was formed. I had a second assigned me in true boxing style. My cousin, as he advanced to fight, said something about his generosity in showing me such fair play, when I had made such an unprovoked attack upon him at his own table. "Stop there," cried I, in a rage. "Unprovoked? know that I am John Buckthorne, and you have insulted the memory of my mother."

The lout was suddenly struck by what I said: he drew back, and thought for a moment.

"Nay, damn it," said he, "that's too much—that's clean another thing—I've a mother myself—and no one shall speak ill of her, bad as she is."

He paused again: nature seemed to have a rough struggle in his rude bosom.

"Damn it, cousin," cried he, "I'm sorry for what I said. Thou'st served me right in knocking me down, and I like thee the better for it. Here's my hand: come and

live with me, and damn me but the best room in the house, and the best horse in the stable, shall be at thy service."

I declare to you I was strongly moved at this instance of nature breaking her way through such a lump of flesh. I forgave the fellow in a moment his two heinous crimes, of having been born in wedlock, and inheriting my estate. I shook the hand he offered me, to convince him that I bore him no ill-will; and then making my way through the gaping crowd of toad-eaters, bade adieu to my uncle's domains forever.—This is the last I have seen or heard of my cousin, or of the domestic concerns of Doubting Castle.

THE STROLLING MANAGER.

AS I was walking one morning with Buckthorne near one of the principal theatres, he directed my attention to a group of those equivocal beings that may often be seen hovering about the stage-doors of theatres. They were marvellously ill-favored in their attire, their coats buttoned up to their chins; yet they wore their hats smartly on one side, and had a certain knowing, dirty-gentlemanlike air, which is common to the subalterns of the drama. Buckthorne knew them well by early experience.

"These," said he, "are the ghosts of departed kings and heroes; fellows who sway sceptres and truncheons; command kingdoms and armies; and after giving away realms and treasures over night, have scarce a shilling to pay for a breakfast in the morning. Yet they have the true vagabond abhorrence of all useful and industrious employment; and they have their pleasures too; one of which is to lounge in this way in the sunshine, at the stage-door, during rehearsals, and make hackneyed theatrical jokes on all passers-by. Nothing is more traditional and legitimate than the stage. Old scenery, old clothes,

old sentiments, old ranting, and old jokes, are handed down from generation to generation; and will probably continue to be so until time shall be no more. Every hanger-on of a theatre becomes a wag by inheritance, and flourishes about at tap-rooms and sixpenny clubs with the property jokes of the green-room."

While amusing ourselves with reconnoitring this group, we noticed one in particular who appeared to be the oracle. He was a weather-beaten veteran, a little bronzed by time and beer, who had no doubt grown gray in the parts of robbers, cardinals, Roman senators, and walking noblemen.

"There is something in the set of that hat, and the turn of that physiognomy, extremely familiar to me," said Buckthorne. He looked a little closer,—"I cannot be mistaken, that must be my old brother of the truncheon, Flimsey, the tragic hero of the Strolling Company."

It was he in fact. The poor fellow showed evident signs that times went hard with him, he was so finely and shabbily dressed. His coat was somewhat threadbare, and of the Lord Townly cut; single breasted, and scarcely capable of meeting in front of his body, which, from long intimacy, had acquired the symmetry and robustness of a beer-barrel. He wore a pair of dingy-white stockinet pantaloons, which had much ado to reach his waistcoat, a great quantity of dirty cravat; and a pair of old russet-colored tragedy boots.

When his companions had dispersed, Buckthorne drew him aside, and made himself known to him. The tragic veteran could scarcely recognize him, or believe that he was really his quondam associate, "little Gentleman Jack." Buckthorne invited him to a neighboring coffee-house to talk over old times; and in the course of a little while we were put in possession of his history in brief.

He had continued to act the heroes in the strolling company for some time after Buckthorne had left it, or rather had been driven from it so abruptly. At length the manager died, and the troop was thrown into confusion. Every one aspired to the crown, every one was for taking the lead; and the manager's widow, although a tragedy queen, and a brimstone to boot, pronounced it utterly impossible for a woman to keep any control over such a set of tempestuous rascallions.

"Upon this hint, I spoke," said Flimsey. I stepped forward, and offered my services in the most effectual way. They were accepted. In a week's time I married the widow, and succeeded to the throne. "The funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage table," as Hamlet says. But the ghost of my predecessor never haunted me; and I inherited crowns, sceptres, bowls, daggers, and all the stage trappings and trumpery, not omitting the widow, without the least molestation.

I now led a flourishing life of it; for our company was pretty strong and attractive, and as my wife and I took the heavy parts of tragedy, it was a great saving to the

treasury. We carried off the palm from all the rival shows at country fairs; and I assure you we have even drawn full houses, and been applauded by the critics at Bartlemy Fair itself, though we had Astley's troop, the Irish giant, and "the death of Nelson" in wax work, to contend against.

I soon began to experience, however, the cares of command. I discovered that there were cabals breaking out in the company, headed by the clown, who you may recollect was a terribly peevish, fractious fellow, and always in ill-humor. I had a great mind to turn him off at once, but I could not do without him, for there was not a droller scoundrel on the stage. His very shape was comic, for he had but to turn his back upon the audience, and all the ladies were ready to die with laughing. He felt his importance, and took advantage of it. He would keep the audience in a continual roar, and then come behind the scenes, and fret and fume, and play the very devil. I excused a great deal in him, however, knowing that comic actors are a little prone to this infirmity of temper.

I had another trouble of a nearer and dearer nature to struggle with, which was the affection of my wife. As ill luck would have it, she took it into her head to be very fond of me, and became intolerably jealous. I could not keep a pretty girl in the company, and hardly dared embrace an ugly one, even when my part required it. I have known her reduce a fine lady to tatters, "to very

rags," as Hamlet says, in an instant, and destroy one of the very best dresses in the wardrobe, merely because she saw me kiss her at the side scenes; though I give you my honor it was done merely by way of rehearsal.

This was doubly annoying, because I have a natural liking to pretty faces, and wish to have them about me; and because they are indispensable to the success of a company at a fair, where one has to vie with so many rival theatres. But when once a jealous wife gets a freak in her head, there's no use in talking of interest or anything else. Egad, sir, I have more than once trembled when, during a fit of her tantrums, she was playing high tragedy, and flourishing her tin dagger on the stage, lest she should give way to her humor, and stab some fancied rival in good earnest.

I went on better, however, than could be expected, considering the weakness of my flesh, and the violence of my rib. I had not a much worse time of it than old Jupiter, whose spouse was continually ferreting out some new intrigue, and making the heavens almost too hot to hold him.

At length, as luck would have it, we were performing at a country fair, when I understood the theatre of a neighboring town to be vacant. I had always been desirous to be enrolled in a settled company, and the height of my desire was to get on a par with a brother-in-law, who was manager of a regular theatre, and who had looked down upon me. Here was an opportunity

not to be neglected. I concluded an agreement with the proprietors, and in a few days opened the theatre with great eclat.

Behold me now at the summit of my ambition, "the high top-gallant of my joy," as Romeo says. No longer a chieftain of a wandering tribe, but a monarch of a legitimate throne, and entitled to call even the great potentates of Covent Garden and Drury Lane cousins. You, no doubt, think my happiness complete. Alas, sir! I was one of the most uncomfortable dogs living. No one knows, who has not tried, the miseries of a manager; but above all of a country manager. No one can conceive the contentions and quarrels within doors, the oppressions and vexations from without. I was pestered with the bloods and loungers of a country town, who infested my green-room, and played the mischief among my actresses. But there was no shaking them off. It would have been ruin to affront them; for though troublesome friends, they would have been dangerous enemies. Then there was the village critics and village amateurs, who were continually tormenting me with advice, and getting into a passion if I would not take it; especially the village doctor and the village attorney, who had both been to London occasionally, and knew what acting should be.

I had also to manage as arrant a crew of scapegraces as ever were collected together within the walls of a theatre. I had been obliged to combine my original

troop with some of the former troop of the theatre, who were favorites of the public. Here was a mixture that produced perpetual ferment. They were all the time either fighting or frolicking with each other, and I scarcely know which mood was least troublesome. If they quarrelled, everything went wrong, and if they were friends, they were continually playing off some prank upon each other, or upon me; for I had unhappily acquired among them the character of an easy, good-natured fellow,—the worst character that a manager can possess.

Their waggery at times drove me almost crazy; for there is nothing so vexatious as the hackneyed tricks and hoaxes and pleasantries of a veteran band of theatrical vagabonds. I relished them well enough, it is true, while I was merely one of the company, but as a manager I found them detestable. They were incessantly bringing some disgrace upon the theatre by their tavern frolics and their pranks about the country town. All my lectures about the importance of keeping up the dignity of the profession and the respectability of the company were in vain. The villains could not sympathize with the delicate feelings of a man in station. They even trifled with the seriousness of stage business. I have had the whole piece interrupted, and a crowded audience of at least twenty-five pounds kept waiting, because the actors had hid away the breeches of Rosalind; and have known Hamlet to stalk solemnly on to

deliver his soliloquy, with a dish-clout pinned to his skirts. Such are the baleful consequences of a manager's getting a character for good-nature.

I was intolerably annoyed, too, by the great actors who came down starring, as it is called, from London. Of all baneful influences, keep me from that of a London star. A first-rate actress going the rounds of the country theatres is as bad as a blazing comet whisking about the heavens, and shaking fire and plagues and discords from its tail.

The moment one of these "heavenly bodies" appeared in my horizon, I was sure to be in hot water. My theatre was overrun by provincial dandies, copper-washed counterfeits of Bond Street loungers, who are always proud to be in the train of an actress from town, and anxious to be thought on exceeding good terms with her. It was really a relief to me when some random young nobleman would come in pursuit of the bait, and awe all this small fry at a distance. I have always felt myself more at ease with a nobleman than with the dandy of a country town.

And then the injuries I suffered in my personal dignity and my managerial authority from the visits of these great London actors! 'Sblood, sir, I was no longer master of myself on my throne. I was hectored and lectured in my own green-room, and made an absolute nincompoop on my own stage. There is no tyrant so absolute and capricious as a London star at a country theatre. I

dreaded the sight of all of them, and yet if I did not engage them, I was sure of having the public clamorous against me. They drew full houses, and appeared to be making my fortune; but they swallowed up all the profits by their insatiable demands. They were absolute tape-worms to my little theatre; the more it took in the poorer it grew. They were sure to leave me with an exhausted public, empty benches, and a score or two of affronts to settle among the townsfolk, in consequence of misunderstandings about the taking of places.

But the worst thing I had to undergo in my managerial career was patronage. Oh, sir! of all things deliver me from the patronage of the great people of a country town. It was my ruin. You must know that this town, though small, was filled with feuds, and parties, and great folks; being a busy little trading and manufacturing town. The mischief was that their greatness was of a kind not to be settled by reference to the court calendar, or college of heraldry; it was therefore the most quarrelsome kind of greatness in existence. You smile, sir, but let me tell you there are no feuds more furious than the frontier feuds which take place in these "debatable lands" of gentility. The most violent dispute that I ever knew in high life was one which occurred at a country town, on a question of precedence between the ladies of a manufacturer of pins and a manufacturer of needles.

At the town where I was situated there were perpetual altercations of the kind. The head manufacturer's lady,

for instance, was at daggers-drawings with the head shopkeeper's, and both were too rich and had too many friends to be treated lightly. The doctor's and lawyer's ladies held their heads still higher; but they in turn were kept in check by the wife of a country banker, who kept her own carriage; while a masculine widow of cracked character and second-handed fashion, who lived in a large house and claimed to be in some way related to nobility, looked down upon them all. To be sure, her manners were not over-elegant, nor her fortune over-large; but then, sir, her blood—oh, her blood carried it all hollow; there was no withstanding a woman with such blood in her veins.

After all, her claims to high connection were questioned, and she had frequent battles for precedence at balls and assemblies with some of the sturdy dames of the neighborhood, who stood upon their wealth and their virtue; but then she had two dashing daughters, who dressed as fine as dragoons, and had as high blood as their mother, and seconded her in everything; so they carried their point with high heads, and everybody hated, abused, and stood in awe of the Fantadlins.

Such was the state of the fashionable world in this self-important little town. Unluckily, I was not as well acquainted with its politics as I should have been. I had found myself a stranger and in great perplexities during my first season; I determined, therefore, to put myself under the patronage of some powerful name, and thus to

take the field with the prejudices of the public in my favor. I cast around my thoughts for that purpose, and in an evil hour they fell upon Mrs. Fantadlin. No one seemed to me to have a more absolute sway in the world of fashion. I had always noticed that her party slammed the box-door the loudest at the theatre; and had the most beaux attending on them, and talked and laughed loudest during the performance; and then the Miss Fantadlins wore always more feathers and flowers than any other ladies; and used quizzing-glasses incessantly. The first evening of my theatre's re-opening, therefore, was announced in staring capitals on the play-bills, as under the patronage of "The Honorable Mrs. Fantadlin."

Sir, the whole community flew to arms! the banker's wife felt her dignity grievously insulted at not having the preference; her husband being high bailiff and the richest man in the place. She immediately issued invitations for a large party, for the night of the performance, and asked many a lady to it whom she never had noticed before. Presume to patronize the theatre! insufferable! And then for me to dare to term her "The Honorable!" What claim had she to the title forsooth? The fashionable world had long groaned under the tyranny of the Fantadlins, and were glad to make a common cause against this new instance of assumption. Those, too, who had never before been noticed by the banker's lady were ready to enlist in any quarrel for the honor of her acquaintance. All minor feuds were forgotten. The

doctor's lady and the lawyer's lady met together, and the manufacturer's lady and the shopkeeper's lady kissed each other; and all, headed by the banker's lady, voted the theatre a *bore*, and determined to encourage nothing but the Indian Jugglers and Mr. Walker's Eidouranion.

Alas for poor Pillgarlick! I knew little the mischief that was brewing against me. My box-book remained blank; the evening arrived; but no audience. The music struck up to a tolerable pit and gallery, but no fashionables! I peeped anxiously from behind the curtain, but the time passed away; the play was retarded, until pit and gallery became furious; and I had to raise the curtain, and play my greatest part in tragedy to "a beggarly account of empty boxes."

It is true the Fantadlins came late, as was their custom, and entered like a tempest, with a flutter of feathers and red shawls; but they were evidently disconcerted at finding they had no one to admire and envy them, and were enraged at this glaring defection of their fashionable followers. All the beau-monde were engaged at the banker's lady's rout. They remained for some time in solitary and uncomfortable state; and though they had the theatre almost to themselves, yet, for the first time, they talked in whispers. They left the house at the end of the first piece, and I never saw them afterwards.

Such was the rock on which I split. I never got over the patronage of the Fantadlin family. My house was

deserted; my actors grew discontented because they were ill paid; my door became a hammering place for every bailiff in the country; and my wife became more and more shrewish and tormenting the more I wanted comfort.

I tried for a time the usual consolation of a harassed and henpecked man; I took to the bottle, and tried to tipple away my cares, but in vain. I don't mean to decry the bottle; it is no doubt an excellent remedy in many cases, but it did not answer in mine. It cracked my voice, coppered my nose, but neither improved my wife nor my affairs. My establishment became a scene of confusion and peculation. I was considered a ruined man, and of course fair game for every one to pluck at, as every one plunders a sinking ship. Day after day some of the troop deserted, and, like deserting soldiers, carried off their arms and accoutrements with them. In this manner my wardrobe took legs and walked away, my finery strolled all over the country, my swords and daggers glittered in every barn, until, at last, my tailor made "one fell swoop," and carried off three dress-coats, half a dozen doublets, and nineteen pair of flesh-colored pantaloons. This was the "be all and the end all" of my fortune. I no longer hesitated what to do. Egad, thought I, since stealing is the order of the day, I'll steal too; so I secretly gathered together the jewels of my wardrobe, packed up a hero's dress in a handkerchief, slung it on the end of a tragedy sword, and quietly stole off at dead

of night, "the bell then beating one," leaving my queen and kingdom to the mercy of my rebellious subjects, and my merciless foes the bumbailiffs.

Such, sir, was the "end of all my greatness." I was heartily cured of all passion for governing, and returned once more into the ranks. I had for some time the usual run of an actor's life. I played in various country theatres, at fairs, and in barns; sometimes hard pushed, sometimes flush, until, on one occasion, I came within an ace of making my fortune, and becoming one of the wonders of the age.

I was playing the part of Richard the Third in a country barn, and in my best style; for, to tell the truth, I was a little in liquor, and the critics of the company always observed that I played with most effect when I had a glass too much. There was a thunder of applause when I came to that part where Richard cries for "a horse! a horse!" My cracked voice had always a wonderful effect here; it was like two voices run into one; you would have thought two men had been calling for a horse, or that Richard had called for two horses. And when I flung the taunt at Richmond, "Richard is *hoarse* with calling thee to arms," I thought the barn would have come down about my ears with the raptures of the audience.

The very next morning a person waited upon me at my lodgings. I saw at once he was a gentleman by his dress; for he had a large brooch in his bosom, thick

rings on his fingers, and used a quizzing-glass. And a gentleman he proved to be; for I soon ascertained that he was a kept author, or kind of literary tailor to one of the great London theatres; one who worked under the manager's directions, and cut up and cut down plays, and patched and pieced, and new faced, and turned them inside out; in short, he was one of the readiest and greatest writers of the day.

He was now on a foraging excursion in quest of something that might be got up for a prodigy. The theatre, it seems, was in desperate condition—nothing but a miracle could save it. He had seen me act Richard the night before, and had pitched upon me for that miracle. I had a remarkable bluster in my style and swagger in my gait. I certainly differed from all other heroes of the barn: so the thought struck the agent to bring me out as a theatrical wonder, as the restorer of natural and legitimate acting, as the only one who could understand and act Shakspeare rightly.

When he opened his plan I shrunk from it with becoming modesty, for well as I thought of myself, I doubted my competency to such an undertaking.

I hinted at my imperfect knowledge of Shakspeare, having played his characters only after mutilated copies, interlarded with a great deal of my own talk by way of helping memory or heightening the effect.

"So much the better!" cried the gentleman with rings on his fingers; "so much the better! New read-

ings, sir!—new readings! Don't study a line—let us have Shakspeare after your own fashion."

"But then my voice was cracked; it could not fill a London theatre."

"So much the better! so much the better! The public is tired of intonation—the *ore rotundo* has had its day. No, sir, your cracked voice is the very thing;—spit and splutter, and snap and snarl, and 'play the very dog' about the stage, and you'll be the making of us."

"But then,"—I could not help blushing to the end of my very nose as I said it, but I was determined to be candid,—"but then," added I, "there is one awkward circumstance: I have an unlucky habit—my misfortunes, and the exposures to which one is subjected in country barns, have obliged me now and then to—to—take a drop of something comfortable—and so—and so"——

"What! you drink?" cried the agent, eagerly.

I bowed my head in blushing acknowledgment.

"So much the better! so much the better! The irregularities of genius! A sober fellow is commonplace. The public like an actor that drinks. Give me your hand, sir. You're the very man to make a dash with."

I still hung back with lingering diffidence, declaring myself unworthy of such praise.

"'Sblood, man," cried he, "no praise at all. You don't imagine *I* think you a wonder; I only want the public to think so. Nothing is so easy as to gull the

public, if you only set up a prodigy. Common talent anybody can measure by common rule; but a prodigy sets all rule and measurement at defiance."

These words opened my eyes in an instant: we now came to a proper understanding, less flattering, it is true, to my vanity, but much more satisfactory to my judgment.

It was agreed that I should make my appearance before a London audience, as a dramatic sun just bursting from behind the clouds: one that was to banish all the lesser lights and false fires of the stage. Every precaution was to be taken to possess the public mind at every avenue. The pit was to be packed with sturdy clappers; the newspapers secured by vehement puffers; every theatrical resort to be haunted by hireling talkers. In a word, every engine of theatrical humbug was to be put in action. Wherever I differed from former actors, it was to be maintained that I was right and they were wrong. If I ranted, it was to be pure passion; if I were vulgar, it was to be pronounced a familiar touch of nature; if I made any queer blunder, it was to be a new reading. If my voice cracked, or I got out in my part, I was only to bounce, and grin, and snarl at the audience, and make any horrible grimace that came into my head, and my admirers were to call it "a great point," and to fall back and shout and yell with rapture.

"In short," said the gentleman with the quizzing-glass, "strike out boldly and bravely: no matter how or

what you do, so that it be but odd and strange. If you do but escape pelting the first night, your fortune and the fortune of the theatre is made."

I set off for London, therefore, in company with the kept author, full of new plans and new hopes. I was to be the restorer of Shakspeare and Nature, and the legitimate drama; my very swagger was to be heroic, and my cracked voice the standard of elocution. Alas, sir, my usual luck attended me: before I arrived at the metropolis a rival wonder had appeared; a woman who could dance the slack rope, and run up a cord from the stage to the gallery with fireworks all round her. She was seized on by the manager with avidity. She was the saving of the great national theatre for the season. Nothing was talked of but Madame Saqui's fireworks and flesh-colored pantaloons; and Nature, Shakspeare, the legitimate drama, and poor Pillgarlick, were completely left in the lurch.

When Madame Saqui's performance grew stale, other wonders succeeded: horses, and harlequinades, and mummery of all kinds; until another dramatic prodigy was brought forward to play the very game for which I had been intended. I called upon the kept author for an explanation, but he was deeply engaged in writing a melodrama or a pantomime, and was extremely testy on being interrupted in his studies. However, as the theatre was in some measure pledged to provide for me, the manager acted, according to the usual phrase, "like

a man of honor," and I received an appointment in the corps. It had been a turn of a die whether I should be Alexander the Great or Alexander the coppersmith—the latter carried it. I could not be put at the head of the drama, so I was put at the tail of it. In other words, I was enrolled among the number of what are called *useful men;* those who enact soldiers, senators, and Banquo's shadowy line. I was perfectly satisfied with my lot; for I have always been a bit of a philosopher. If my situation was not splendid, it at least was secure; and in fact I have seen half a dozen prodigies appear, dazzle, burst like bubbles, and pass away, and yet here I am, snug, unenvied, and unmolested, at the foot of the profession.

You may smile; but let me tell you, we "useful men" are the only comfortable actors on the stage. We are safe from hisses, and below the hope of applause. We fear not the success of rivals, nor dread the critic's pen. So long as we get the words of our parts, and they are not often many, it is all we care for. We have our own merriment, our own friends, and our own admirers, —for every actor has his friends and admirers, from the highest to the lowest. The first-rate actor dines with the noble amateur, and entertains a fashionable table with scraps and songs and theatrical slip-slop. The second-rate actors have their second-rate friends and admirers, with whom they likewise spout tragedy and talk slip-slop;—and so down even to us; who have our friends and admirers among spruce clerks and aspiring apprentices

who treat us to a dinner now and then, and enjoy at tenth hand the same scraps and songs and slip-slop that have been served up by our more fortunate brethren at the tables of the great.

I now, for the first time in my theatrical life, experience what true pleasure is. I have known enough of notoriety to pity the poor devils who are called favorites of the public. I would rather be a kitten in the arms of a spoiled child, to be one moment patted and pampered and the next moment thumped over the head with the spoon. I smile to see our leading actors fretting themselves with envy and jealousy about a trumpery renown, questionable in its quality, and uncertain in its duration. I laugh, too, though of course in my sleeve, at the bustle and importance, and trouble and perplexities of our manager—who is harassing himself to death in the hopeless effort to please everybody.

I have found among my fellow-subalterns two or three quondam managers, who like myself have wielded the sceptres of country theatres, and we have many a sly joke together at the expense of the manager and the public. Sometimes, too, we meet, like deposed and exiled kings, talk over the events of our respective reigns, moralize over a tankard of ale, and laugh at the humbug of the great and little world; which, I take it, is the essence of practical philosophy.

Thus end the anecdotes of Buckthorne and his friends.

It grieves me much that I could not procure from him further particulars of his history, and especially of that part of it which passed in town. He had evidently seen much of literary life; and, as he had never risen to eminence in letters, and yet was free from the gall of disappointment, I had hoped to gain some candid intelligence concerning his contemporaries. The testimony of such an honest chronicler would have been particularly valuable at the present time; when, owing to the extreme fecundity of the press, and the thousand anecdotes, criticisms, and biographical sketches that are daily poured forth concerning public characters, it is extremely difficult to get at any truth concerning them.

He was always, however, excessively reserved and fastidious on this point, at which I very much wondered, authors in general appearing to think each other fair game, and being ready to serve each other up for the amusement of the public.

A few mornings after hearing the history of the ex-manager, I was surprised by a visit from Buckthorne before I was out of bed. He was dressed for travelling.

"Give me joy! give me joy!" said he, rubbing his hands with the utmost glee, "my great expectations are realized!"

I gazed at him with a look of wonder and inquiry.

"My booby cousin is dead!" cried he; "may he rest in peace! he nearly broke his neck in a fall from his horse in a fox-chase. By good luck, he lived long

enough to make his will. He has made me his heir, partly out of an odd feeling of retributive justice, and partly because, as he says, none of his own family nor friends know how to enjoy such an estate. I'm off to the country to take possession. I've done with authorship. That for the critics!" said he, snapping his finger. "Come down to Doubting Castle, when I get settled, and, egad, I'll give you a rouse." So saying, he shook me heartily by the hand, and bounded off in high spirits.

A long time elapsed before I heard from him again. Indeed, it was but lately that I received a letter, written in the happiest of moods. He was getting the estate in fine order; everything went to his wishes; and what was more, he was married to Sacharissa, who it seems had always entertained an ardent though secret attachment for him, which he fortunately discovered just after coming to his estate.

"I find," said he, "you are a little given to the sin of authorship, which I renounce: if the anecdotes I have given you of my story are of any interest, you may make use of them; but come down to Doubting Castle, and see how we live, and I'll give you my whole London life over a social glass; and a rattling history it shall be about authors and reviewers."

If ever I visit Doubting Castle and get the history he promises, the public shall be sure to hear of it.

PART THIRD.

THE ITALIAN BANDITTI.

THE INN AT TERRACINA.

RACK! crack! crack! crack! crack!

"Here comes the estafette from Naples," said mine host of the inn at Terracina; "bring out the relay."

The estafette came galloping up the road according to custom, brandishing over his head a short-handled whip, with a long, knotted lash, every smack of which made a report like a pistol. He was a tight, square-set young fellow, in the usual uniform: a smart blue coat, ornamented with facings and gold lace, but so short behind as to reach scarcely below his waistband, and cocked up not unlike the tail of a wren; a cocked hat edged with gold lace; a pair of stiff riding-boots; but, instead of the usual leathern breeches, he had a fragment of a pair of drawers, that scarcely furnished an apology for modesty to hide behind.

The estafette galloped up to the door, and jumped from his horse.

"A glass of rosolio, a fresh horse, and a pair of breeches," said he, "and quickly, *per l'amor di Dio*, I am behind my time, and must be off!"

"San Gennaro!" replied the host; "why, where hast thou left thy garment?"

"Among the robbers between this and Fondi."

"What, rob an estafette! I never heard of such folly. What could they hope to get from thee?"

"My leather breeches!" replied the estafette. "They were bran new, and shone like gold, and hit the fancy of the captain."

"Well, these fellows grow worse and worse. To meddle with an estafette! and that merely for the sake of a pair of leather breeches!"

The robbing of the government messenger seemed to strike the host with more astonishment than any other enormity that had taken place on the road; and, indeed, it was the first time so wanton an outrage had been committed; the robbers generally taking care not to meddle with anything belonging to government.

The estafette was by this time equipped, for he had not lost an instant in making his preparations while talking. The relay was ready; the rosolio tossed off; he grasped the reins and the stirrup.

"Were there many robbers in the band?" said a handsome, dark young man, stepping forward from the door of the inn.

"As formidable a band as ever I saw," said the estafette, springing into the saddle.

"Are they cruel to travellers?" said a beautiful young

Venetian lady, who had been hanging on the gentleman's arm.

"Cruel, signora!" echoed the estafette, giving a glance at the lady as he put spurs to his horse. "Corpo di Bacco! They stiletto all the men; and, as to the women"——— Crack! crack! crack! crack! crack!—The last words were drowned in the smacking of the whip, and away galloped the estafette along the road to the Pontine marshes.

"Holy Virgin!" ejaculated the fair Venetian, "what will become of us!"

The inn of which we are speaking stands just outside of the walls of Terracina, under a vast precipitous height of rocks, crowned with the ruins of the castle of Theodoric the Goth. The situation of Terracina is remarkable. It is a little, ancient, lazy Italian town, on the frontiers of the Roman territory. There seems to be an idle pause in everything about the place. The Mediterranean spreads before it—that sea without flux or reflux. The port is without a sail, excepting that once in a while a solitary felucca may be seen disgorging its holy cargo of baccala, or codfish, the meagre provision for the quaresima, or Lent. The inhabitants are apparently a listless, heedless race, as people of soft sunny climates are apt to be; but under this passive, indolent exterior are said to lurk dangerous qualities. They are supposed by many to be little better than the banditti of the neighboring mountains, and indeed to hold a secret correspondence

with them. The solitary watch-towers, erected here and there along the coast, speak of pirates and corsairs that hover about these shores; while the low huts, as stations for soldiers, which dot the distant road, as it winds up through an olive grove, intimate that in the ascent there is danger for the traveller, and facility for the bandit. Indeed, it is between this town and Fondi that the road to Naples is most infested by banditti. It has several windings and solitary places, where the robbers are enabled to see the traveller from a distance, from the brows of hills or impending precipices, and to lie in wait for him at lonely and difficult passes.

The Italian robbers are a desperate class of men, that have almost formed themselves into an order of society. They wear a kind of uniform, or rather costume, which openly designates their profession. This is probably done to diminish its skulking, lawless character, and to give it something of a military air in the eyes of the common people; or, perhaps, to catch by outward show and finery the fancies of the young men of the villages, and thus to gain recruits. Their dresses are often very rich and picturesque. They wear jackets and breeches of bright colors, sometimes gayly embroidered; their breasts are covered with medals and relics; their hats are broad-brimmed, with conical crowns, decorated with feathers, of variously-colored ribands; their hair is sometimes gathered in silk nets; they wear a kind of sandal of cloth or leather, bound round the legs with thongs, and

extremely flexible, to enable them to scramble with ease and celerity among the mountain precipices; a broad belt of cloth, or a sash of silk net, is stuck full of pistols and stilettos; a carbine is slung at the back; while about them is generally thrown, in a negligent manner, a great dingy mantle, which serves as a protection in storms, or a bed in their bivouacs among the mountains.

They range over a great extent of wild country, along the chain of Apennines, bordering on different states; they know all the difficult passes, the short cuts for retreat, and the impracticable forests of the mountain summits, where no force dare follow them. They are secure of the good-will of the inhabitants of those regions, a poor and semi-barbarous race, whom they never disturb and often enrich. Indeed, they are considered as a sort of illegitimate heroes among the mountain villages, and in certain frontier towns where they dispose of their plunder. Thus countenanced, and sheltered, and secure in the fastnesses of their mountains, the robbers have set the weak police of the Italian states at defiance. It is in vain that their names and descriptions are posted on the doors of country churches, and rewards offered for them alive or dead; the villagers are either too much awed by the terrible instances of vengeance inflicted by the brigands, or have too good an understanding with them to be their betrayers. It is true they are now and then hunted and shot down like beasts of prey by the *gens-d'armes*, their heads put in iron cages, and stuck upon posts by

the roadside, or their limbs hung up to blacken in the trees near the places where they have committed their atrocities; but these ghastly spectacles only serve to make some dreary pass of the road still more dreary, and to dismay the traveller, without deterring the bandit.

At the time that the estafette made his sudden appearance almost *en cuerpo*, as has been mentioned, the audacity of the robbers had risen to an unparalleled height. They had laid villas under contribution; they had sent messages into country towns, to tradesmen and rich burghers, demanding supplies of money, of clothing, or even of luxuries, with menaces of vengeance in case of refusal. They had their spies and emissaries in every town, village, and inn, along the principal roads, to give them notice of the movements and quality of travellers. They had plundered carriages, carried people of rank and fortune into the mountains, and obliged them to write for heavy ransoms, and had committed outrages on females who had fallen into their hands.

Such was briefly the state of the robbers, or rather such was the account of the rumors prevalent concerning them, when the scene took place at the inn of Terracina. The dark handsome young man and the Venetian lady, incidentally mentioned, had arrived early that afternoon in a private carriage drawn by mules, and attended by a single servant. They had been recently married, were spending the honey-moon in travelling through these

delicious countries, and were on their way to visit a rich aunt of the bride at Naples.

The lady was young, and tender, and timid. The stories she had heard along the road had filled her with apprehension, not more for herself than for her husband; for though she had been married almost a month, she still loved him almost to idolatry. When she reached Terracina, the rumors of the road had increased to an alarming magnitude; and the sight of two robbers' skulls, grinning in iron cages, on each side of the old gateway of the town, brought her to a pause. Her husband had tried in vain to reassure her; they had lingered all the afternoon at the inn, until it was too late to think of starting that evening, and the parting words of the estafette completed her affright.

"Let us return to Rome," said she, putting her arm within her husband's, and drawing towards him as if for protection. "Let us return to Rome, and give up this visit to Naples."

"And give up the visit to your aunt, too?" said the husband.

"Nay—what is my aunt in comparison with your safety?" said she, looking up tenderly in his face.

There was something in her tone and manner that showed she really was thinking more of her husband's safety at the moment than of her own; and being so recently married, and a match of pure affection, too, it is very possible that she was; at least her husband thought

so. Indeed, any one who has heard the sweet musical tone of a Venetian voice, and the melting tenderness of a Venetian phrase, and felt the soft witchery of a Venetian eye, would not wonder at the husband's believing whatever they professed. He clasped the white hand that had been laid within his, put his arm round her slender waist, and drawing her fondly to his bosom, "This night, at least," said he, "we will pass at Terracina."

Crack! crack! crack! crack! crack! Another apparition of the road attracted the attention of mine host and his guests. From the direction of the Pontine marshes, a carriage, drawn by half a dozen horses, came driving at a furious rate; the postilions smacking their whips like mad, as is the case when conscious of the greatness or of the munificence of their fare. It was a landaulet with a servant mounted on the dickey. The compact, highly finished, yet proudly simple construction of the carriage; the quantity of neat, well-arranged trunks and conveniences; the loads of box-coats on the dickey; the fresh, burly, bluff-looking face of the master at the window; and the ruddy, round-headed servant, in close-cropped hair, short coat, drab breeches, and long gaiters, all proclaimed at once that this was the equipage of an Englishman.

"Horses to Fondi," said the Englishman, as the landlord came bowing to the carriage-door.

"Would not his Excellenza alight, and take some refreshments?"

"No—he did not mean to eat until he got to Fondi."

"But the horses will be some time in getting ready."

"Ah! that's always the way; nothing but delay in this cursed country!"

"If his Excellenza would only walk into the house"—

"No, no, no!—I tell you no!—I want nothing but horses, and as quick as possible. John, see that the horses are got ready, and don't let us be kept here an hour or two. Tell him if we're delayed over the time, I'll lodge a complaint with the postmaster."

John touched his hat, and set off to obey his master's orders with the taciturn obedience of an English servant.

In the meantime the Englishman got out of the carriage, and walked up and down before the inn, with his hands in his pockets, taking no notice of the crowd of idlers who were gazing at him and his equipage. He was tall, stout, and well made; dressed with neatness and precision; wore a travelling cap of the color of gingerbread; and had rather an unhappy expression about the corners of his mouth: partly from not having yet made his dinner, and partly from not having been able to get on at a greater rate than seven miles an hour. Not that he had any other cause for haste than an Englishman's usual hurry to get to the end of a journey; or, to use the regular phrase, "to get on." Perhaps, too, he was a little sore from having been fleeced at every stage.

After some time the servant returned from the stable with a look of some perplexity.

"Are the horses ready, John?"

"No, sir—I never saw such a place. There's no getting anything done. I think your honor had better step into the house and get something to eat; it will be a long while before we get to Fundy."

"D—n the house—it's a mere trick—I'll not eat anything, just to spite them," said the Englishman, still more crusty at the prospect of being so long without his dinner.

"They say your honor's very wrong," said John, "to set off at this late hour. The road's full of highwaymen."

"Mere tales to get custom."

"The estafette which passed us was stopped by a whole gang," said John, increasing his emphasis with each additional piece of information.

"I don't believe a word of it."

"They robbed him of his breeches," said John, giving at the same time a hitch to his own waistband.

"All humbug!"

Here the dark handsome young man stepped forward, and addressing the Englishman very politely, in broken English, invited him to partake of a repast he was about to make.

"Thank'ee," said the Englishman, thrusting his hands deeper into his pockets, and casting a slight side-glance of suspicion at the young man, as if he thought, from his civility, he must have a design upon his purse.

"We shall be most happy, if you will do us the favor,"

said the lady, in her soft Venetian dialect. There was a sweetness in her accents that was most persuasive. The Englishman cast a look upon her countenance; her beauty was still more eloquent. His features instantly relaxed. He made a polite bow. "With great pleasure, Signora," said he.

In short, the eagerness to "get on" was suddenly slackened; the determination to famish himself as far as Fondi, by way of punishing the landlord, was abandoned; John chose an apartment in the inn for his master's reception; and preparations were made to remain there until morning.

The carriage was unpacked of such of its contents as were indispensable for the night. There was the usual parade of trunks and writing-desks, and portfolios and dressing-boxes, and those other oppressive conveniences which burden a comfortable man. The observant loiterers about the inn-door, wrapped up in great dirt-colored cloaks, with only a hawk's-eye uncovered, made many remarks to each other on this quantity of luggage that seemed enough for an army. The domestics of the inn talked with wonder of the splendid dressing-case, with its gold and silver furniture, that was spread out on the toilet table, and the bag of gold that chinked as it was taken out of the trunk. The strange *Milor's* wealth, and the treasures he carried about him, were the talk, that evening, over all Terracina.

The Englishman took some time to make his ablutions

and arrange his dress for table; and, after considerable labor and effort in putting himself at his ease, made his appearance, with stiff white cravat, his clothes free from the least speck of dust, and adjusted with precision. He made a civil bow on entering in the unprofessing English way, which the fair Venetian, accustomed to the complimentary salutations of the Continent, considered extremely cold.

The supper, as it was termed by the Italian, or dinner, as the Englishman called it, was now served: heaven and earth, and the waters under the earth, had been moved to furnish it; for there were birds of the air, and beasts of the field, and fish of the sea. The Englishman's servant, too, had turned the kitchen topsy-turvy in his zeal to cook his master a beefsteak; and made his appearance, loaded with ketchup, and soy, and Cayenne pepper, and Harvey sauce, and a bottle of port wine, from that warehouse, the carriage, in which his master seemed desirous of carrying England about the world with him. Indeed the repast was one of those Italian farragoes which require a little qualifying. The tureen of soup was a black sea, with livers, and limbs, and fragments of all kinds of birds, and beasts floating like wrecks about it. A meagre-winged animal, which my host called a delicate chicken, had evidently died of a consumption. The macaroni was smoked. The beefsteak was tough buffalo's flesh. There was what appeared to be a dish of stewed eels, of which the Englishman ate with great relish; but had nearly re-

funded them when told that they were vipers, caught among the rocks of Terracina, and esteemed a great delicacy.

Nothing, however, conquers a traveller's spleen sooner than eating, whatever may be the cookery; and nothing brings him into good-humor with his company sooner than eating together; the Englishman, therefore, had not half finished his repast and his bottle, before he began to think the Venetian a very tolerable fellow for a foreigner, and his wife almost handsome enough to be an Englishwoman.

In the course of the repast, the usual topics of travellers were discussed, and among others, the reports of robbers, which harassed the mind of the fair Venetian. The landlord and waiter dipped into the conversation with that familiarity permitted on the Continent, and served up so many bloody tales as they served up the dishes, that they almost frightened away the poor lady's appetite. The Englishman, who had a national antipathy to everything technically called "humbug," listened to them all with a certain screw of the mouth, expressive of incredulity. There was the well-known story of the school of Terracina, captured by the robbers; and one of the scholars cruelly massacred, in order to bring the parents to terms for the ransom of the rest. And another, of a gentleman of Rome, who received his son's ear in a letter, with information, that his son would be remitted to him in this way, by instalments, until he paid the required ransom.

The fair Venetian shuddered as she heard these tales; and the landlord, like a true narrator of the terrible, doubled the dose when he saw how it operated. He was just proceeding to relate the misfortunes of a great English lord and his family, when the Englishman, tired of his volubility, interrupted him, and pronounced these accounts to be mere travellers' tales, or the exaggerations of ignorant peasants, and designing innkeepers. The landlord was indignant at the doubt levelled at his stories, and the innuendo levelled at his cloth; he cited, in corroboration, half a dozen tales still more terrible.

"I don't believe a word of them," said the Englishman.

"But the robbers have been tried and executed!"

"All a farce!"

"But their heads are stuck up along the road!"

"Old skulls accumulated during a century."

The landlord muttered to himself as he went out at the door, "San Gennaro! quanto sono singolari questi Inglesi!"

A fresh hubbub outside of the inn announced the arrival of more travellers; and, from the variety of voices, or rather of clamors, the clattering of hoofs, the rattling of wheels, and the general uproar both within and without, the arrival seemed to be numerous.

It was, in fact, the procaccio and its convoy: a kind of caravan which sets out on certain days for the transportation of merchandise, with an escort of soldiery to protect it from the robbers. Travellers avail themselves of

its protection, and a long file of carriages generally accompany it.

A considerable time elapsed before either landlord or waiter returned; being hurried hither and thither by that tempest of noise and bustle, which takes place in an Italian inn on the arrival of any considerable accession of custom. When mine host reappeared, there was a smile of triumph on his countenance.

"Perhaps," said he, as he cleared the table, "perhaps the signor has not heard of what has happened?"

"What?" said the Englishman, dryly.

"Why, the procaccio has brought accounts of fresh exploits of the robbers."

"Pish!"

"There's more news of the English Milor and his family," said the host, exultingly.

"An English lord? What English lord?"

"Milor Popkin."

"Lord Popkins? I never heard of such a title!"

"O! sicuro a great nobleman, who passed through here lately with mi ladi and her daughters. A magnifico, one of the grand counsellors of London, an almanno!"

"Almanno—almanno?—tut—he means alderman."

"Sicuro—Aldermanno Popkin, and the Principessa Popkin, and the Signorine Popkin!" said mine host, triumphantly.

He now put himself into an attitude, and would have launched into a full detail, had he not been thwarted by

the Englishman, who seemed determined neither to credit nor indulge him in his stories, but dryly motioned for him to clear away the table.

An Italian tongue, however, is not easily checked; that of mine host continued to wag with increasing volubility, as he conveyed the relics of the repast out of the room; and the last that could be distinguished of his voice, as it died away along the corridor, was the iteration of the favorite word, Popkin—Popkin—Popkin—pop—pop—pop.

The arrival of the procaccio had, indeed, filled the house with stories, as it had with guests. The Englishman and his companions walked after supper up and down the large hall, or common room of the inn, which ran through the centre of the building. It was spacious and somewhat dirty, with tables placed in various parts, at which groups of travellers were seated; while others strolled about, waiting, in famished impatience, for their evening's meal.

It was a heterogeneous assemblage of people of all ranks and countries, who had arrived in all kinds of vehicles. Though distinct knots of travellers, yet the travelling together, under one common escort, had jumbled them into a certain degree of companionship on the road; besides, on the Continent travellers are always familiar, and nothing is more motley than the groups which gather casually together in sociable conversation in the public rooms of inns.

The formidable number, and formidable guard of the procaccio had prevented any molestation from banditti; but every party of travellers had its tale of wonder, and one carriage vied with another in its budget of assertions and surmises. Fierce, whiskered faces had been seen peering over the rocks; carbines and stilettos gleaming from among the bushes; suspicious-looking fellows, with flapped hats, and scowling eyes, had occasionally reconnoitred a straggling carriage, but had disappeared on seeing the guard.

The fair Venetian listened to all these stories with that avidity with which we always pamper any feeling of alarm; even the Englishman began to feel interested in the common topic, desirous of getting more correct information than mere flying reports. Conquering, therefore, that shyness which is prone to keep an Englishman solitary in crowds, he approached one of the talking groups, the oracle of which was a tall, thin Italian, with long aquiline nose, a high forehead, and lively prominent eye, beaming from under a green velvet travelling-cap, with gold tassel. He was of Rome, a surgeon by profession, a poet by choice, and something of an improvisatore.

In the present instance, however, he was talking in plain prose, but holding forth with the fluency of one who talks well, and likes to exert his talent. A question or two from the Englishman drew copious replies; for an Englishman sociable among strangers is regarded as a phenomenon on the Continent, and always treated with

attention for the rarity's sake. The improvisatore gave much the same account of the banditti that I have already furnished.

"But why does not the police exert itself, and root them out?" demanded the Englishman.

"Because the police is too weak, and the banditti are too strong," replied the other. "To root them out would be a more difficult task than you imagine. They are connected and almost identified with the mountain peasantry and the people of the villages. The numerous bands have an understanding with each other, and with the country round. A gendarme cannot stir without their being aware of it. They have their scouts everywhere, who lurk about towns, villages, and inns, mingle in every crowd, and pervade every place of resort. I should not be surprised if some one should be supervising us at this moment."

The fair Venetian looked round fearfully, and turned pale.

Here the improvisatore was interrupted by a lively Neapolitan lawyer.

"By the way," said he, "I recollect a little adventure of a learned doctor, a friend of mine, which happened in this very neighborhood; not far from the ruins of Theodoric's Castle, which are on the top of those great rocky heights above the town."

A wish was, of course, expressed to hear the adventure of the doctor, by all excepting the improvisatore, who,

being fond of talking and of hearing himself talk, and accustomed, moreover, to harangue without interruption, looked rather annoyed at being checked when in full career. The Neapolitan, however, took no notice of his chagrin, but related the following anecdote.

ADVENTURE OF THE LITTLE ANTIQUARY.

MY friend, the Doctor, was a thorough antiquary; a little rusty, musty, old fellow, always groping among ruins. He relished a building as you Englishmen relish a cheese,—the more mouldy and crumbling it was, the more it suited his taste. A shell of an old nameless temple, or the cracked walls of a broken-down amphitheatre, would throw him into raptures; and he took more delight in these crusts and cheese-parings of antiquity than in the best-conditioned modern palaces.

He was a curious collector of coins also, and had just gained an accession of wealth that almost turned his brain. He had picked up, for instance, several Roman Consulars, half a Roman As, two Punics, which had doubtless belonged to the soldiers of Hannibal, having been found on the very spot where they had encamped among the Apennines. He had, moreover, one Samnite, struck after the Social War, and a Philistis, a queen that never existed; but above all, he valued himself upon a coin, indescribable to any but the initiated in these matters,

bearing a cross on one side, and a pegasus on the other, and which, by some antiquarian logic, the little man adduced as an historical document, illustrating the progress of Christianity.

All these precious coins he carried about him in a leathern purse, buried deep in a pocket of his little black breeches.

The last maggot he had taken into his brain was to hunt after the ancient cities of the Pelasgi, which are said to exist to this day among the mountains of the Abruzzi; but about which a singular degree of obscurity prevails.* He had made many discoveries concerning

* Among the many fond speculations of antiquaries is that of the existence of traces of the ancient Pelasgian cities in the Apennines; and many a wistful eye is cast by the traveller, versed in antiquarian lore, at the richly wooded mountains of the Abruzzi, as a forbidden fairy land of research. These spots, so beautiful, yet so inaccessible, from the rudeness of their inhabitants and the hordes of banditti which infest them, are a region of fable to the learned. Sometimes a wealthy virtuoso, whose purse and whose consequence could command a military escort, has penetrated to some individual point among the mountains; and sometimes a wandering artist or student, under protection of poverty or insignificance, has brought away some vague account, only calculated to give a keener edge to curiosity and conjecture.

By those who maintain the existence of the Pelasgian cities, it is affirmed that the formation of the different kingdoms in the Peloponnesus gradually caused the expulsion thence of the Pelasgi; but that their great migration may be dated from the finishing the wall around Acropolis, and that at this period they came to Italy. To these, in the spirit of theory, they would ascribe the introduction of the elegant arts into the country. It is evident, however, that, as barbarians flying before the first dawn of civilization, they could bring little with them superior to the inventions of the aborigines, and nothing that would have survived to the anti-

them, and had recorded a great many valuable notes and memorandums on the subject, in a voluminous book, which he always carried about with him; either for the purpose of frequent reference, or through fear lest the precious document should fall into the hands of brother antiquaries. He had, therefore, a large pocket in the skirt of his coat, where he bore about this inestimable tome, banging against his rear as he walked.

Thus heavily laden with the spoils of antiquity, the good little man, during a sojourn at Terracina, mounted one day the rocky cliffs which overhang the town, to visit the castle of Theodoric. He was groping about the ruins towards the hour of sunset, buried in his reflections, his wits no doubt wool-gathering among the Goths and Romans, when he heard footsteps behind him.

He turned, and beheld five or six young fellows, of rough, saucy demeanor, clad in a singular manner, half peasant, half huntsman, with carbines in their hands.

quarian through such a lapse of ages. It would appear more probable, that these cities, improperly termed Pelasgian, were coeval with many that have been discovered. The romantic Aricia, built by Hippolytus before the siege of Troy, and the poetic Tibur, Æsculate and Præneste, built by Telegonus after the dispersion of the Greeks;—these, lying contiguous to inhabited and cultivated spots, have been discovered. There are others, too, on the ruins of which the latter and more civilized Grecian colonists have ingrafted themselves, and which have become known by their merits or their medals. But that there are many still undiscovered, imbedded in the Abruzzi, it is the delight of the antiquarians to fancy. Strange that such a virgin soil for research, such an unknown realm of knowledge, should at this day remain in the very centre of hackneyed Italy!

Their whole appearance and carriage left him no doubt into what company he had fallen.

The Doctor was a feeble little man, poor in look, and poor in purse. He had but little gold or silver to be robbed of; but then he had his curious ancient coin in his breeches-pocket. He had, moreover, certain other valuables, such as an old silver watch, thick as a turnip, with figures on it large enough for a clock; and a set of seals at the end of a steel chain, dangling half-way down to his knees. All these were of precious esteem, being family relics. He had also a seal ring, a veritable antique intaglio, that covered half his knuckles. It was a Venus, which the old man almost worshipped with the zeal of a voluptuary. But what he most valued was his inestimable collection of hints relative to the Pelasgian cities, which he would gladly have given all the money in his pocket to have had safe at the bottom of his trunk in Terracina.

However, he plucked up a stout heart, at least as stout a heart as he could, seeing that he was but a puny little man at the best of times. So he wished the hunters a "buon giorno." They returned his salutation, giving the old gentleman a sociable slap on the back that made his heart leap into his throat.

They fell into conversation, and walked for some time together among the heights, the Doctor wishing them all the while at the bottom of the crater of Vesuvius. At length they came to a small osteria on the mountain,

where they proposed to enter and have a cup of wine together; the Doctor consented, though he would as soon have been invited to drink hemlock.

One of the gang remained sentinel at the door; the others swaggered into the house, stood their guns in the corner of the room, and each drawing a pistol or stiletto out of his belt, laid it upon the table. They now drew benches round the board, called lustily for wine, and, hailing the Doctor as though he had been a boon companion of long standing, insisted upon his sitting down and making merry.

The worthy man complied with forced grimace, but with fear and trembling; sitting uneasily on the edge of his chair: eying ruefully the black-muzzled pistols, and cold, naked stilettos; and supping down heartburn with every drop of liquor. His new comrades, however, pushed the bottle bravely, and plied him vigorously. They sang, they laughed; told excellent stories of their robberies and combats, mingled with many ruffian jokes; and the little Doctor was fain to laugh at all their cut-throat pleasantries, though his heart was dying away at the very bottom of his bosom.

By their own account, they were young men from the villages, who had recently taken up this line of life out of the wild caprice of youth. They talked of their murderous exploits as a sportsman talks of his amusements: to shoot down a traveller seemed of little more consequence to them than to shoot a hare. They spoke with rapture

of the glorious roving life they led, free as birds; here to-day, gone to-morrow; ranging the forests, climbing the rocks, scouring the valleys; the world their own wherever they could lay hold of it; full purses—merry companions—pretty women. The little antiquary got fuddled with their talk and their wine, for they did not spare bumpers. He half forgot his fears, his seal ring, and his family watch; even the treatise on the Pelasgian cities, which was warming under him, for a time faded from his memory in the glowing picture that they drew. He declares that he no longer wonders at the prevalence of this robber mania among the mountains; for he felt at the time, that, had he been a young man, and a strong man, and had there been no danger of the galleys in the background, he should have been half tempted himself to turn bandit.

At length the hour of separating arrived. The Doctor was suddenly called to himself and his fears by seeing the robbers resume their weapons. He now quaked for his valuables, and, above all, for his antiquarian treatise. He endeavored, however, to look cool and unconcerned; and drew from out his deep pocket a long, lank, leathern purse, far gone in consumption, at the bottom of which a few coin chinked with the trembling of his hand.

The chief of the party observed his movement, and laying his hand upon the antiquary's shoulder, "Harkee! Signor Dottore!" said he, "we have drunk together as friends and comrades; let us part as such. We under-

stand you. We know who and what you are, for we know who everybody is that sleeps at Terracina, or that puts foot upon the road. You are a rich man, but you carry all your wealth in your head: we cannot get at it, and we should not know what to do with it if we could. I see you are uneasy about your ring; but don't worry yourself, it is not worth taking; you think it an antique, but it's a counterfeit—a mere sham."

Here the ire of the antiquary rose: the Doctor forgot himself in his zeal for the character of his ring. Heaven and earth! His Venus a sham. Had they pronounced the wife of his bosom "no better than she should be," he could not have been more indignant. He fired up in vindication of his intaglio.

"Nay, nay," continued the robber, "we have no time to dispute about it; value it as you please. Come, you're a brave little old signor—one more cup of wine, and we'll pay the reckoning. No compliments—you shall not pay a grain—you are our guest—I insist upon it. So—now make the best of your way back to Terracina; it's growing late. Buon viaggio! And harkee! take care how you wander among these mountains,—you may not always fall into such good company."

They shouldered their guns; sprang gayly up the rocks; and the little Doctor hobbled back to Terracina, rejoicing that the robbers had left his watch, his coins, and his treatise, unmolested; but still indignant that they should have pronounced his Venus an impostor.

The improvisatore had shown many symptoms of impatience during this recital. He saw his theme in danger of being taken out of his hands, which to an able talker is always a grievance, but to an improvisatore is an absolute calamity: and then for it to be taken away by a Neapolitan was still more vexatious; the inhabitants of the different Italian states having an implacable jealousy of each other in all things, great and small. He took advantage of the first pause of the Neapolitan to catch hold again of the thread of the conversation.

"As I observed before," said he, "the prowlings of the banditti are so extensive; they are so much in league with one another, and so interwoven with various ranks of society"——

"For that matter," said the Neapolitan, "I have heard that your government has had some understanding with those gentry; or, at least, has winked at their misdeeds."

"My government?" said the Roman, impatiently.

"Ay, they say that Cardinal Gonsalvi"—

"Hush!" said the Roman, holding up his finger, and rolling his large eyes about the room.

"Nay, I only repeat what I heard commonly rumored in Rome," replied the Neapolitan, sturdily. "It was openly said, that the Cardinal had been up to the mountains, and had an interview with some of the chiefs. And I have been told, moreover, that, while honest people have been kicking their heels in the Cardinal's

ante-chamber, waiting by the hour for admittance, one of those stiletto-looking fellows has elbowed his way through the crowd, and entered without ceremony into the Cardinal's presence."

"I know," observed the improvisatore, "that there have been such reports, and it is not impossible that government may have made use of these men at particular periods: such as at the time of your late abortive revolution, when your carbonari were so busy with their machinations all over the country. The information which such men could collect, who were familiar, not merely with the recesses and secret places of the mountains, but also with the dark and dangerous recesses of society; who knew every suspicious character, and all his movements and all his lurkings; in a word, who knew all that was plotting in a world of mischief;—the utility of such men as instruments in the hands of government was too obvious to be overlooked; and Cardinal Gonsalvi, as a politic statesman, may, perhaps, have made use of them. Besides, he knew that, with all their atrocities, the robbers were always respectful towards the Church, and devout in their religion."

"Religion! religion!" echoed the Englishman.

"Yes, religion," repeated the Roman. "They have each their patron saint. They will cross themselves and say their prayers, whenever, in their mountain haunts, they hear the matin or the Ave-Maria bells sounding from the valleys; and will often descend from their

retreats, and run imminent risks to visit some favorite shrine. I recollect an instance in point.

"I was one evening in the village of Frascati, which stands on the beautiful brow of a hill rising from the Campagna, just below the Abruzzi Mountains. The people, as is usual in fine evenings in our Italian towns and villages, were recreating themselves in the open air, and chatting in groups in the public square. While I was conversing with a knot of friends, I noticed a tall fellow, wrapped in a great mantle, passing across the square, but skulking along in the dusk, as if anxious to avoid observation. The people drew back as he passed. It was whispered to me that he was a notorious bandit."

"But why was he not immediately seized?" said the Englishman.

"Because it was nobody's business; because nobody wished to incur the vengeance of his comrades; because there were not sufficient gendarmes near to insure security against the number of desperadoes he might have at hand; because the gendarmes might not have received particular instructions with respect to him, and might not feel disposed to engage in a hazardous conflict without compulsion. In short, I might give you a thousand reasons rising out of the state of our government and manners, not one of which after all might appear satisfactory."

The Englishman shrugged his shoulders with an air of contempt.

"I have been told," added the Roman, rather quickly, "that even in your metropolis of London, notorious thieves, well known to the police as such, walk the streets at noonday in search of their prey, and are not molested unless caught in the very act of robbery."

The Englishman gave another shrug but with a different expression.

"Well, sir, I fixed my eye on this daring wolf, thus prowling through the fold, and saw him enter a church. I was curious to witness his devotion. You know our spacious magnificent churches. The one in which he entered was vast, and shrouded in the dusk of evening. At the extremity of the long aisles a couple of tapers feebly glimmered on the grand altar. In one of the side chapels was a votive candle placed before the image of a saint. Before this image the robber had prostrated himself. His mantle partly falling off from his shoulders as he knelt, revealed a form of Herculean strength; a stiletto and pistol glittered in his belt; and the light falling on his countenance, showed features not unhandsome, but strongly and fiercely characterized. As he prayed, he became vehemently agitated; his lips quivered; sighs and murmurs, almost groans, burst from him; he beat his breast with violence; then clasped his hands and wrung them convulsively, as he extended them towards the image. Never had I seen such a terrific picture of remorse. I felt fearful of being discovered watching him, and withdrew. Shortly afterwards I saw

him issue from the church wrapped in his mantle. He recrossed the square, and no doubt returned to the mountains with a disburdened conscience, ready to incur a fresh arrear of crime."

Here the Neapolitan was about to get hold of the conversation, and had just preluded with the ominous remark, "That puts me in mind of a circumstance," when the improvisatore, too adroit to suffer himself to be again superseded, went on, pretending not to hear the interruption.

"Among the many circumstances connected with the banditti, which serve to render the traveller uneasy and insecure, is the understanding which they sometimes have with inn-keepers. Many an isolated inn among the lonely parts of the Roman territories, and especially about the mountains, is of a dangerous and perfidious character. They are places where the banditti gather information, and where the unwary traveller, remote from hearing or assistance, is betrayed to the midnight dagger. The robberies committed at such inns are often accompanied by the most atrocious murders; for it is only by the complete extermination of their victims that the assassins can escape detection. I recollect an adventure," added he, "which occurred at one of these solitary mountain inns, which, as you all seem in a mood for robber anecdotes, may not be uninteresting."

Having secured the attention and awakened the curiosity of the by-standers, he paused for a moment, rolled

up his large eyes as improvisatori are apt to do when they would recollect an impromptu, and then related with great dramatic effect the following story, which had, doubtless, been well prepared and digested beforehand.

THE BELATED TRAVELLERS.

IT was late one evening that a carriage, drawn by mules, slowly toiled its way up one of the passes of the Apennines. It was through one of the wildest defiles, where a hamlet occurred only at distant intervals, perched on the summit of some rocky height, or the white towers of a convent peeped out from among the thick mountain foliage. The carriage was of ancient and ponderous construction. Its faded embellishments spoke of former splendor, but its crazy springs and axle-trees creaked out the tale of present decline. Within was seated a tall, thin old gentleman, in a kind of military travelling-dress, and a foraging-cap trimmed with fur, though the gray locks which stole from under it hinted that his fighting days were over. Beside him was a pale, beautiful girl of eighteen, dressed in something of a northern or Polish costume. One servant was seated in front, a rusty, crusty looking fellow, with a scar across his face, an orange-tawny *schnurbart* or pair of moustaches, bristling from under his nose, and altogether the air of an old soldier.

It was, in fact, the equipage of a Polish nobleman; a

wreck of one of those princely families once of almost oriental magnificence, but broken down and impoverished by the disasters of Poland. The Count, like many other generous spirits, had been found guilty of the crime of patriotism, and was, in a manner, an exile from his country. He had resided for some time in the first cities of Italy, for the education of his daughter, in whom all his cares and pleasures were now centred. He had taken her into society, where her beauty and her accomplishments gained her many admirers; and had she not been the daughter of a poor broken-down Polish nobleman, it is more than probable many would have contended for her hand. Suddenly, however, her health became delicate and drooping; her gayety fled with the roses of her cheek, and she sank into silence and debility. The old Count saw the change with the solicitude of a parent. "We must try a change of air and scene," said he; and in a few days the old family carriage was rumbling among the Apennines.

Their only attendant was the veteran Caspar, who had been born in the family, and grown rusty in its service. He had followed his master in all his fortunes; had fought by his side; had stood over him when fallen in battle; and had received, in his defence, the sabre-cut which added such grimness to his countenance. He was now his valet, his steward, his butler, his factotum. The only being that rivalled his master in his affections was his youthful mistress. She had grown up under his eye,

he had led her by the hand when she was a child, and he now looked upon her with the fondness of a parent. Nay, he even took the freedom of a parent in giving his blunt opinion on all matters which he thought were for her good; and felt a parent's vanity at seeing her gazed at and admired.

The evening was thickening; they had been for some time passing through narrow gorges of the mountains, along the edges of a tumbling stream. The scenery was lonely and savage. The rocks often beetled over the road, with flocks of white goats browsing on their brinks, and gazing down upon the travellers. They had between two or three leagues yet to go before they could reach any village; yet the muleteer, Pietro, a tippling old fellow, who had refreshed himself at the last halting-place with a more than ordinary quantity of wine, sat singing and talking alternately to his mules, and suffering them to lag on at a snail's pace, in spite of the frequent entreaties of the Count and maledictions of Caspar.

The clouds began to roll in heavy masses along the mountains, shrouding their summits from view. The air was damp and chilly. The Count's solicitude on his daughter's account overcame his usual patience. He leaned from the carriage, and called to old Pietro in an angry tone.

"Forward!" said he. "It will be midnight before we arrive at our inn."

"Yonder it is, Signor," said the muleteer.

"Where?" demanded the Count.

"Yonder," said Pietro, pointing to a desolate pile about a quarter of a league distant.

"That the place?—why, it looks more like a ruin than an inn. I thought we were to put up for the night at a comfortable village."

Here Pietro uttered a string of piteous exclamations and ejaculations, such as are ever at the tip of the tongue of a delinquent muleteer. "Such roads! and such mountains! and then his poor animals were way-worn, and leg-weary; they would fall lame; they would never be able to reach the village. And then what could his Excellenza wish for better than the inn; a perfect castello—a palazzo—and such people!—and such a larder! —and such beds!—His Excellenza might fare as sumptuously, and sleep as soundly there as a prince!"

The Count was easily persuaded, for he was anxious to get his daughter out of the night air; so in a little while the old carriage rattled and jingled into the great gateway of the inn.

The building did certainly in some measure answer to the muleteer's description. It was large enough for either castle or palace; built in a strong, but simple and almost rude style; with a great quantity of waste room. It had in fact been, in former times, a hunting-seat of one of the Italian princes. There was space enough within its walls and outbuildings to have accommodated a little army. A scanty household seemed now to peo-

ple this dreary mansion. The faces that presented themselves on the arrival of the travellers were begrimed with dirt, and scowling in their expression. They all knew old Pietro, however, and gave him a welcome as he entered, singing and talking, and almost whooping, into the gateway.

The hostess of the inn waited, herself, on the Count and his daughter, to show them the apartments. They were conducted through a long gloomy corridor, and then through a suite of chambers opening into each other, with lofty ceilings, and great beams extending across them. Everything, however, had a wretched, squalid look. The walls were damp and bare, excepting that here and there hung some great painting, large enough for a chapel, and blackened out of all distinction.

They chose two bedrooms, one within another; the inner one for the daughter. The bedsteads were massive and misshapen; but on examining the beds so vaunted by old Pietro, they found them stuffed with fibres of hemp knotted in great lumps. The Count shrugged his shoulders, but there was no choice left.

The chilliness of the apartments crept to their bones; and they were glad to return to a common chamber or kind of hall, where was a fire burning in a huge cavern, miscalled a chimney. A quantity of green wood, just thrown on, puffed out volumes of smoke. The room corresponded to the rest of the mansion. The floor was paved and dirty. A great oaken table stood in the centre,

immovable from its size and weight. The only thing that contradicted this prevalent air of indigence was the dress of the hostess. She was a slattern of course; yet her garments, though dirty and negligent, were of costly materials. She wore several rings of great value on her fingers, and jewels in her ears, and round her neck was a string of large pearls, to which was attached a sparkling crucifix. She had the remains of beauty, yet there was something in the expression of her countenance that inspired the young lady with singular aversion. She was officious and obsequious in her attentions, and both the Count and his daughter felt relieved, when she consigned them to the care of a dark, sullen-looking servant-maid, and went off to superintend the supper.

Caspar was indignant at the muleteer for having, either through negligence or design, subjected his master and mistress to such quarters; and vowed by his moustaches to have revenge on the old varlet the moment they were safe out from among the mountains. He kept up a continual quarrel with the sulky servant-maid, which only served to increase the sinister expression with which she regarded the travellers, from under her strong dark eyebrows.

As to the Count, he was a good-humored passive traveller. Perhaps real misfortunes had subdued his spirit, and rendered him tolerant of many of those petty evils which make prosperous men miserable. He drew a large broken arm-chair to the fireside for his daughter, and

another for himself, and seizing an enormous pair of tongs, endeavored to rearrange the wood so as to produce a blaze. His efforts, however, were only repaid by thicker puffs of smoke, which almost overcame the good gentleman's patience. He would draw back, cast a look upon his delicate daughter, then upon the cheerless, squalid apartment, and, shrugging his shoulders, would give a fresh stir to the fire.

Of all the miseries of a comfortless inn, however, there is none greater than sulky attendance; the good Count for some time bore the smoke in silence, rather than address himself to the scowling servant-maid. At length he was compelled to beg for drier firewood. The woman retired muttering. On reëntering the room hastily, with an armful of fagots, her foot slipped; she fell, and striking her head against the corner of a chair, cut her temple severely.

The blow stunned her for a time, and the wound bled profusely. When she recovered, she found the Count's daughter administering to her wound, and binding it up with her own handkerchief. It was such an attention as any woman of ordinary feeling would have yielded; but perhaps there was something in the appearance of the lovely being who bent over her, or in the tones of her voice, that touched the heart of the woman, unused to be administered to by such hands. Certain it is, she was strongly affected. She caught the delicate hand of the Polonaise, and pressed it fervently to her lips.

"May San Francesco watch over you, Signora!" exclaimed she.

A new arrival broke the stillness of the inn. It was a Spanish princess with a numerous retinue. The courtyard was in an uproar; the house in a bustle. The landlady hurried to attend such distinguished guests; and the poor Count and his daughter, and their supper, were for a moment forgotten. The veteran Caspar muttered Polish maledictions enough to agonize an Italian ear; but it was impossible to convince the hostess of the superiority of his old master and young mistress to the whole nobility of Spain.

The noise of the arrival had attracted the daughter to the window just as the new-comers had alighted. A young cavalier sprang out of the carriage and handed out the Princess. The latter was a little shrivelled old lady, with a face of parchment and sparkling black eye; she was richly and gayly dressed, and walked with the assistance of a golden-headed cane as high as herself. The young man was tall and elegantly formed. The Count's daughter shrank back at the sight of him, though the deep frame of the window screened her from observation. She gave a heavy sigh as she closed the casement. What that sigh meant I cannot say. Perhaps it was at the contrast between the splendid equipage of the Princess, and the crazy rheumatic-looking old vehicle of her father, which stood hard by. Whatever might be the reason, the young lady closed the casement with a sigh. She

returned to her chair,—a slight shivering passed over her delicate frame: she leaned her elbow on the arm of the chair, rested her pale cheek in the palm of her hand, and looked mournfully into the fire.

The Count thought she appeared paler than usual.

"Does anything ail thee, my child?" said he.

"Nothing, dear father!" replied she, laying her hand within his, and looking up smiling in his face; but as she said so, a treacherous tear rose suddenly to her eye, and she turned away her head.

"The air of the window has chilled thee," said the Count, fondly, "but a good night's rest will make all well again."

The supper-table was at length laid, and the supper about to be served, when the hostess appeared, with her usual obsequiousness, apologizing for showing in the new-comers; but the night air was cold, and there was no other chamber in the inn with a fire in it. She had scarcely made the apology when the Princess entered, leaning on the arm of the elegant young man.

The Count immediately recognized her for a lady whom he had met frequently in society, both at Rome and Naples; and at whose conversaziones, in fact, he had been constantly invited. The cavalier, too, was her nephew and heir, who had been greatly admired in the gay circles both for his merits and prospects, and who had once been on a visit at the same time with his

daughter and himself at the villa of a nobleman near Naples. Report had recently affianced him to a rich Spanish heiress.

The meeting was agreeable to both the Count and the Princess. The former was a gentleman of the old school, courteous in the extreme; the Princess had been a belle in her youth, and a woman of fashion all her life, and liked to be attended to.

The young man approached the daughter, and began something of a complimentary observation; but his manner was embarrassed, and his compliment ended in an indistinct murmur; while the daughter bowed without looking up, moved her lips without articulating a word, and sank again into her chair, where she sat gazing into the fire, with a thousand varying expressions passing over her countenance.

This singular greeting of the young people was not perceived by the old ones, who were occupied at the time with their own courteous salutations. It was arranged that they should sup together; and as the Princess travelled with her own cook, a very tolerable supper soon smoked upon the board. This, too, was assisted by choice wines, and liquors, and delicate confitures brought from one of her carriages; for she was a veteran epicure, and curious in her relish for the good things of this world. She was, in fact, a vivacious little old lady, who mingled the woman of dissipation with the devotee. She was actually on her way to Loretto to

expiate a long life of gallantries and peccadilloes by a rich offering at the holy shrine. She was, to be sure, rather a luxurious penitent, and a contrast to the primitive pilgrims, with scrip and staff, and cockle-shell; but then it would be unreasonable to expect such self-denial from people of fashion; and there was not a doubt of the ample efficacy of the rich crucifixes, and golden vessels, and jewelled ornaments, which she was bearing to the treasury of the blessed Virgin.

The Princess and the Count chatted much during supper about the scenes and society in which they had mingled, and did not notice that they had all the conversation to themselves: the young people were silent and constrained. The daughter ate nothing in spite of the politeness of the Princess, who continually pressed her to taste of one or other of the delicacies. The Count shook his head.

"She is not well this evening," said he. "I thought she would have fainted just now as she was looking out of the window at your carriage on its arrival."

A crimson glow flushed to the very temples of the daughter; but she leaned over her plate, and her tresses cast a shade over her countenance.

When supper was over, they drew their chairs about the great fireplace. The flame and smoke had subsided, and a heap of glowing embers diffused a grateful warmth. A guitar, which had been brought from the Count's carriage, leaned against the wall; the Princess perceived it.—

"Can we not have a little music before parting for the night?" demanded she.

The Count was proud of his daughter's accomplishment, and joined in the request. The young man made an effort of politeness, and taking up the guitar, presented it, though in an embarrassed manner, to the fair musician. She would have declined it, but was too much confused to do so; indeed, she was so nervous and agitated, that she dared not trust her voice, to make an excuse. She touched the instrument with a faltering hand, and, after preluding a little, accompanied herself in several Polish airs. Her father's eyes glistened as he sat gazing on her. Even the crusty Caspar lingered in the room, partly through a fondness for the music of his native country, but chiefly through his pride in the musician. Indeed the melody of the voice, and the delicacy of the touch, were enough to have charmed more fastidious ears. The little Princess nodded her head and tapped her hand to the music, though exceedingly out of time; while the nephew sat buried in profound contemplation of a black picture on the opposite wall.

"And now," said the Count, patting her cheek fondly, "one more favor. Let the Princess hear that little Spanish air you were so fond of. You can't think," added he, "what a proficiency she has made in your language; though she has been a sad girl, and neglected it of late."

The color flushed the pale cheek of the daughter She

hesitated, murmured something; but with sudden effort, collected herself, struck the guitar boldly, and began. It was a Spanish romance, with something of love and melancholy in it. She gave the first stanza with great expression, for the tremulous, melting tones of her voice went to the heart; but her articulation failed, her lips quivered, the song died away, and she burst into tears.

The Count folded her tenderly in his arms. "Thou art not well, my child," said he, "and I am tasking thee cruelly. Retire to thy chamber, and God bless thee!" She bowed to the company without raising her eyes, and glided out of the room.

The Count shook his head as the door closed. "Something is the matter with that child," said he, "which I cannot divine. She has lost all health and spirits lately. She was always a tender flower, and I had much pains to rear her. Excuse a father's foolishness," continued he, "but I have seen much trouble in my family; and this poor girl is all that is now left to me; and she used to be so lively"——

"Maybe she's in love!" said the little Princess, with a shrewd nod of the head.

"Impossible!" replied the good Count, artlessly. "She has never mentioned a word of such a thing to me."

How little did the worthy gentleman dream of the thousand cares, and griefs, and mighty love concerns

which agitate a virgin heart, and which a timid girl scarcely breathes unto herself.

The nephew of the Princess rose abruptly and walked about the room.

When she found herself alone in her chamber, the feelings of the young lady, so long restrained, broke forth with violence. She opened the casement that the cool air might blow upon her throbbing temples. Perhaps there was some little pride or pique mingled with her emotions; though her gentle nature did not seem calculated to harbor any such angry inmate.

"He saw me weep!" said she, with a sudden mantling of the cheek, and a swelling of the throat,—"but no matter!—no matter!"

And so saying, she threw her white arms across the window-frame, buried her face in them, and abandoned herself to an agony of tears. She remained lost in a reverie, until the sound of her father's and Caspar's voices in the adjoining room gave token that the party had retired for the night. The lights gleaming from window to window, showed that they were conducting the Princess to her apartments, which were in the opposite wing of the inn; and she distinctly saw the figure of the nephew as he passed one of the casements.

She heaved a deep heart-drawn sigh, and was about to close the lattice, when her attention was caught by words spoken below her window by two persons who had just turned an angle of the building.

"But what will become of the poor young lady?" said a voice, which she recognized for that of the servant-woman.

"Pooh! she must take her chance," was the reply from old Pietro.

"But cannot she be spared?" asked the other, entreatingly; "she's so kind-hearted!"

"Cospetto! what has got into thee?" replied the other, petulantly: "would you mar the whole business for the sake of a silly girl?" By this time they had got so far from the window that the Polonaise could hear nothing further. There was something in this fragment of conversation calculated to alarm. Did it relate to herself?—and if so, what was this impending danger from which it was entreated that she might be spared? She was several times on the point of tapping at her father's door, to tell him what she had heard, but she might have been mistaken; she might have heard indistinctly; the conversation might have alluded to some one else; at any rate, it was too indefinite to lead to any conclusion. While in this state of irresolution, she was startled by a low knock against the wainscot in a remote part of her gloomy chamber. On holding up the light, she beheld a small door there, which she had not before remarked. It was bolted on the inside. She advanced, and demanded who knocked, and was answered in a voice of the female domestic. On opening the door, the woman stood before it pale and agitated. She entered softly,

laying her finger on her lips as in sign of caution and secrecy.

"Fly!" said she: "leave this house instantly, or you are lost!"

The young lady, trembling with alarm, demanded an explanation.

"I have no time," replied the woman, "I dare not—I shall be missed if I linger here—but fly instantly, or you are lost."

"And leave my father?"

"Where is he?"

"In the adjoining chamber."

"Call him, then, but lose no time."

The young lady knocked at her father's door. He was not yet retired to bed. She hurried into his room, and told him of the fearful warnings she had received. The Count returned with her into the chamber, followed by Caspar. His questions soon drew the truth out of the embarrassed answers of the woman. The inn was beset by robbers. They were to be introduced after midnight, when the attendants of the Princess and the rest of the travellers were sleeping, and would be an easy prey.

"But we can barricade the inn, we can defend ourselves," said the Count.

"What! when the people of the inn are in league with the banditti?"

"How then are we to escape? Can we not order out the carriage and depart?"

"San Francesco! for what? to give the alarm that the plot is discovered? That would make the robbers desperate, and bring them on you at once. They have had notice of the rich booty in the inn, and will not easily let it escape them."

"But how else are we to get off?"

"There is a horse behind the inn," said the woman, "from which the man has just dismounted who has been to summon the aid of part of the band at a distance."

"One horse; and there are three of us!" said the Count.

"And the Spanish Princess!" cried the daughter, anxiously. "How can she be extricated from the danger?"

"Diavolo! what is she to me?" said the woman, in sudden passion. "It is *you* I come to save, and you will betray me, and we shall all be lost! Hark!" continued she, "I am called—I shall be discovered—one word more. This door leads by a staircase to the courtyard. Under the shed, in the rear of the yard, is a small door leading out to the fields. You will find a horse there; mount it; make a circuit under the shadow of a ridge of rocks that you will see; proceed cautiously and quietly until you cross a brook, and find yourself on the road just where there are three white crosses nailed against a tree; then put your horse to his speed, and make the best of your way to the village—but recollect, my life is in your hands—say nothing of what you have heard or seen, whatever may happen at this inn."

The woman hurried away. A short and agitated consultation took place between the Count, his daughter, and the veteran Caspar. The young lady seemed to have lost all apprehension for herself in her solicitude for the safety of the Princess. "To fly in selfish silence, and leave her to be massacred!"—A shuddering seized her at the very thought. The gallantry of the Count, too, revolted at the idea. He could not consent to turn his back upon a party of helpless travellers, and leave them in ignorance of the danger which hung over them.

"But what is to become of the young lady," said Caspar, "if the alarm is given, and the inn thrown in a tumult? What may happen to her in a chance-medley affray?"

Here the feelings of the father were aroused; he looked upon his lovely, helpless child, and trembled at the chance of her falling into the hands of ruffians.

The daughter, however, thought nothing of herself. "The Princess! the Princess!—only let the Princess know her danger." She was willing to share it with her.

At length Caspar interfered with the zeal of a faithful old servant. No time was to be lost—the first thing was to get the young lady out of danger. "Mount the horse," said he to the Count, "take her behind you, and fly! Make for the village, rouse the inhabitants, and send assistance. Leave me here to give the alarm to the Princess and her people. I am an old soldier, and

I think we shall be able to stand siege until you send us aid."

The daughter would again have insisted on staying with the Princess—

"For what?" said old Caspar, bluntly. "You could do no good—you would be in the way;—we should have to take care of you instead of ourselves."

There was no answering these objections; the Count seized his pistols, and taking his daughter under his arm, moved towards the staircase. The young lady paused, stepped back, and said, faltering with agitation—"There is a young cavalier with the Princess—her nephew—perhaps he may"—

"I understand you, Mademoiselle," replied old Caspar, with a significant nod: "not a hair of his head shall suffer harm if I can help it."

The young lady blushed deeper than ever; she had not anticipated being so thoroughly understood by the blunt old servant.

"That is not what I mean," said she, hesitating. She would have added something, or made some explanation, but the moments were precious and her father hurried her away.

They found their way through the courtyard to the small postern gate where the horse stood, fastened to a ring in the wall. The Count mounted, took his daughter behind him, and they proceeded as quietly as possible in the direction which the woman had pointed out. Many

a fearful and anxious look did the daughter cast back upon the gloomy pile; the lights which had feebly twinkled through the dusky casements were one by one disappearing, a sign that the inmates were gradually sinking to repose; and she trembled with impatience, lest succor should not arrive until that repose had been fatally interrupted.

They passed silently and safely along the skirts of the rocks, protected from observation by their overhanging shadows. They crossed the brook, and reached the place where three white crosses nailed against a tree told of some murder that had been committed there. Just as they had reached this ill-omened spot they beheld several men in the gloom coming down a craggy defile among the rocks.

"Who goes there?" exclaimed a voice. The Count put spurs to his horse, but one of the men sprang forward and seized the bridle. The horse started back, and reared; and had not the young lady clung to her father, she would have been thrown off. The Count leaned forward, put a pistol to the very head of the ruffian, and fired. The latter fell dead. The horse sprang forward. Two or three shots were fired which whistled by the fugitives, but only served to augment their speed. They reached the village in safety.

The whole place was soon roused; but such was the awe in which the banditti were held, that the inhabitants shrunk at the idea of encountering them. A desperate

band had for some time infested that pass through the mountains, and the inn had long been suspected of being one of those horrible places where the unsuspicious wayfarer is entrapped and silently disposed of. The rich ornaments worn by the slattern hostess of the inn had excited heavy suspicions. Several instances had occurred of small parties of travellers disappearing mysteriously on that road, who, it was supposed at first, had been carried off by the robbers for the purpose of ransom, but who had never been heard of more. Such were the tales buzzed in the ears of the Count by the villagers, as he endeavored to rouse them to the rescue of the Princess and her train from their perilous situation. The daughter seconded the exertions of her father with all the eloquence of prayers, and tears, and beauty. Every moment that elapsed increased her anxiety until it became agonizing. Fortunately there was a body of gendarmes resting at the village. A number of the young villagers volunteered to accompany them, and the little army was put in motion. The Count having deposited his daughter in a place of safety, was too much of the old soldier not to hasten to the scene of danger. It would be difficult to paint the anxious agitation of the young lady while awaiting the result.

The party arrived at the inn just in time. The robbers, finding their plans discovered, and the travellers prepared for their reception, had become open and furious in their attack. The Princess's party had barricaded

themselves in one suite of apartments, and repulsed the robbers from the doors and windows. Caspar had shown the generalship of a veteran, and the nephew of the Princess the dashing valor of a young soldier. Their ammunition, however, was nearly exhausted, and they would have found it difficult to hold out much longer, when a discharge from the musketry of the gendarmes gave them the joyful tidings of succor.

A fierce fight ensued, for part of the robbers were surprised in the inn, and had to stand siege in their turn; while their comrades made desperate attempts to relieve them from under cover of the neighboring rocks and thickets.

I cannot pretend to give a minute account of the fight, as I have heard it related in a variety of ways. Suffice it to say, the robbers were defeated; several of them killed, and several taken prisoners; which last, together with the people of the inn, were either executed or sent to the galleys.

I picked up these particulars in the course of a journey which I made some time after the event had taken place. I passed by the very inn. It was then dismantled, excepting one wing, in which a body of gendarmes was stationed. They pointed out to me the shot-holes in the window-frames, the walls, and the panels of the doors. There were a number of withered limbs dangling from the branches of a neighboring tree, and blackening in the air, which I was told were the limbs of the rob-

bers who had been slain, and the culprits who had been executed. The whole place had a dismal, wild, forlorn look.

"Were any of the Princess's party killed?" inquired the Englishman.

"As far as I can recollect, there were two or three."

"Not the nephew, I trust?" said the fair Venetian.

"Oh no: he hastened with the Count to relieve the anxiety of the daughter by the assurances of victory. The young lady had been sustained through the interval of suspense by the very intensity of her feelings. The moment she saw her father returning in safety, accompanied by the nephew of the Princess, she uttered a cry of rapture, and fainted. Happily, however, she soon recovered, and what is more, was married shortly afterwards to the young cavalier; and the whole party accompanied the old Princess in her pilgrimage to Loretto, where her votive offerings may still be seen in the treasury of the Santa Casa."

It would be tedious to follow the devious course of the conversation as it wound through a maze of stories of the kind, until it was taken up by two other travellers who had come under convoy of the procaccio: Mr. Hobbs and Mr. Dobbs, a linen-draper and a green-grocer, just returning from a hasty tour in Greece and the Holy Land. They were full of the story of Alderman Popkins. They were astonished that the robbers should dare to molest a

man of his importance on 'Change, he being an eminent dry-salter of Throgmorton Street, and a magistrate to boot.

In fact, the story of the Popkins family was but too true. It was attested by too many present to be for a moment doubted; and from the contradictory and concordant testimony of half a score, all eager to relate it, and all talking at the same time, the Englishman was enabled to gather the following particulars.

ADVENTURE OF THE POPKINS FAMILY.

IT was but a few days before, that the carriage of Alderman Popkins had driven up to the inn of Terracina. Those who have seen an English family-carriage on the Continent must have remarked the sensation it produces. It is an epitome of England; a little morsel of the old Island rolling about the world. Everything about it compact, snug, finished, and fitting. The wheels turning on patent axles without rattling; the body, hanging so well on its springs, yielding to every motion, yet protecting from every shock; the ruddy faces gaping from the windows,—sometimes of a portly old citizen, sometimes of a voluminous dowager, and sometimes of a fine fresh hoyden just from boarding-school. And then the dickeys loaded with well-dressed servants, beef-fed and bluff; looking down from their heights with contempt on all the world around; profoundly ignorant of the country and the people, and devoutly certain that everything not English must be wrong.

Such was the carriage of Alderman Popkins as it made its appearance at Terracina. The courier who had preceded it to order horses, and who was a Neapolitan, had

given a magnificent account of the richness and greatness of his master; blundering with an Italian's splendor of imagination about the Alderman's titles and dignities. The host had added his usual share of exaggeration; so that by the time the Alderman drove up to the door, he was a Milor—Magnifico—Principe—the Lord knows what!

The Alderman was advised to take an escort to Fondi and Itri, but he refused. It was as much as a man's life was worth, he said, to stop him on the king's highway: he would complain of it to the ambassador at Naples; he would make a national affair of it. The Principessa Popkins, a fresh, motherly dame, seemed perfectly secure in the protection of her husband, so omnipotent a man in the city. The Signorines Popkins, two fine bouncing girls, looked to their brother Tom, who had taken lessons in boxing; and as to the dandy himself, he swore no scaramouch of an Italian robber would dare to meddle with an Englishman. The landlord shrugged his shoulders, and turned out the palms of his hands with a true Italian grimace, and the carriage of Milor Popkins rolled on.

They passed through several very suspicious places without any molestation. The Misses Popkins, who were very romantic, and had learnt to draw in water-colors, were enchanted with the savage scenery around; it was so like what they had read in Mrs. Radcliff's romances; they should like, of all things, to make sketches. At length the carriage arrived at a place where the road wound up

a long hill. Mrs. Popkins had sunk into a sleep; the young ladies were lost in the "Loves of the Angels"; and the dandy was hectoring the postilions from the coach-box. The Alderman got out, as he said, to stretch his legs up the hill. It was a long, winding ascent, and obliged him every now and then to stop and blow and wipe his forehead, with many a pish! and phew! being rather pursy and short of wind. As the carriage, however, was far behind him, and moved slowly under the weight of so many well-stuffed trunks, and well-stuffed travellers, he had plenty of time to walk at leisure.

On a jutting point of a rock that overhung the road, nearly at the summit of the hill, just where the road began again to descend, he saw a solitary man seated, who appeared to be tending goats. Alderman Popkins was one of your shrewd travellers who always like to be picking up small information along the road; so he thought he'd just scramble up to the honest man, and have a little talk with him by way of learning the news and getting a lesson in Italian. As he drew near to the peasant, he did not half like his looks. He was partly reclining on the rocks, wrapped in the usual long mantle, which, with his slouched hat, only left a part of a swarthy visage, with a keen black eye, a beetle brow, and a fierce moustache to be seen. He had whistled several times to his dog, which was roving about the side of the hill. As the Alderman approached, he arose and greeted him. When standing erect, he seemed almost gigantic,

at least in the eyes of Alderman Popkins, who, however, being a short man, might be deceived.

The latter would gladly now have been back in the carriage, or even on 'Change in London; for he was by no means well pleased with his company. However, he determined to put the best face on matters, and was beginning a conversation about the state of the weather, the baddishness of the crops, and the price of goats in that part of the country, when he heard a violent screaming. He ran to the edge of the rock, and looking over, beheld his carriage surrounded by robbers. One held down the fat footman, another had the dandy by his starched cravat, with a pistol to his head; one was rummaging a portmanteau, another rummaging the Principessa's pockets; while the two Misses Popkins were screaming from each window of the carriage, and their waiting-maid squalling from the dickey.

Alderman Popkins felt all the ire of the parent and the magistrate roused within him. He grasped his cane, and was on the point of scrambling down the rocks either to assault the robbers or to read the riot act, when he was suddenly seized by the arm. It was by his friend the goatherd, whose cloak falling open, discovered a belt stuck full of pistols and stilettos. In short, he found himself in the clutches of the captain of the band, who had stationed himself on the rock to look out for travellers and to give notice to his men.

A sad ransacking took place. Trunks were turned

inside out, and all the finery and frippery of the Popkins family scattered about the road. Such a chaos of Venice beads and Roman mosaics, and Paris bonnets of the young ladies, mingled with the Alderman's nightcaps and lambs'-wool stockings, and the dandy's hair-brushes, stays, and starched cravats.

The gentlemen were eased of their purses and their watches, the ladies of their jewels; and the whole party were on the point of being carried up into the mountain, when fortunately the appearance of soldiers at a distance obliged the robbers to make off with the spoils they had secured, and leave the Popkins family to gather together the remnants of their effects, and make the best of their way to Fondi.

When safe arrived, the Alderman made a terrible blustering at the inn; threatened to complain to the ambassador at Naples, and was ready to shake his cane at the whole country. The dandy had many stories to tell of his scuffles with the brigands, who overpowered him merely by numbers. As to the Misses Popkins, they were quite delighted with the adventure, and were occupied the whole evening in writing it in their journals. They declared the captain of the band to be a most romantic-looking man, they dared to say some unfortunate lover or exiled nobleman; and several of the band to be very handsome young men—"quite picturesque!"

"In verity," said mine host of Terracina, "they say the captain of the band is *un galant uomo.*"

"A gallant man!" said the Englishman, indignantly: "I'd have your gallant man hanged like a dog!"

"To dare to meddle with Englishmen!" said Mr Hobbs.

"And such a family as the Popkinses!" said Mr. Dobbs.

"They ought to come upon the country for damages!" said Mr. Hobbs.

"Our ambassador should make a complaint to the government of Naples," said Mr. Dobbs.

"They should be obliged to drive these rascals out of the country," said Hobbs.

"And if they did not, we should declare war against them," said Dobbs.

"Pish!—humbug!" muttered the Englishman to himself, and walked away.

The Englishman had been a little wearied by this story, and by the ultra zeal of his countrymen, and was glad when a summons to their supper relieved him from the crowd of travellers. He walked out with his Venetian friends and a young Frenchman of an interesting demeanor, who had become sociable with them in the course of the conversation. They directed their steps towards the sea, which was lit up by the rising moon.

As they strolled along the beach they came to where a party of soldiers were stationed in a circle. They were guarding a number of galley slaves, who were permitted

to refresh themselves in the evening breeze, and sport and roll upon the sand.

The Frenchman paused, and pointed to the group of wretches at their sports. "It is difficult," said he, "to conceive a more frightful mass of crime than is here collected. Many of these have probably been robbers, such as you have heard described. Such is, too often, the career of crime in this country. The parricide, the fratricide, the infanticide, the miscreant of every kind, first flies from justice and turns mountain bandit; and then, when wearied of a life of danger, becomes traitor to his brother desperadoes; betrays them to punishment, and thus buys a commutation of his own sentence from death to the galleys; happy in the privilege of wallowing on the shore an hour a day, in this mere state of animal enjoyment."

The fair Venetian shuddered as she cast a look at the horde of wretches at their evening amusement. "They seemed," she said, "like so many serpents writhing together." And yet the idea that some of them had been robbers, those formidable beings that haunted her imagination, made her still cast another fearful glance, as we contemplate some terrible beast of prey, with a degree of awe and horror, even though caged and chained.

The conversation reverted to the tales of banditti which they had heard at the inn. The Englishman condemned some of them as fabrications, others as exaggerations. As to the story of the improvisatore, he pro-

nounced it a mere piece of romance, originating in the heated brain of the narrator.

"And yet," said the Frenchman, "there is so much romance about the real life of those beings, and about the singular country they infest, that it is hard to tell what to reject on the ground of improbability. I have had an adventure happen to myself which gave me an opportunity of getting some insight into their manners and habits, which I found altogether out of the common run of existence."

There was an air of mingled frankness and modesty about the Frenchman which had gained the goodwill of the whole party, not even excepting the Englishman. They all eagerly inquired after the particulars of the circumstances he alluded to, and as they strolled slowly up and down the sea-shore, he related the following adventure.

THE PAINTER'S ADVENTURE.

I AM an historical painter by profession, and resided for some time in the family of a foreign Prince at his villa, about fifteen miles from Rome, among some of the most interesting scenery of Italy. It is situated on the heights of ancient Tusculum. In its neighborhood are the ruins of the villas of Cicero, Sylla, Lucullus, Rufinus, and other illustrious Romans, who sought refuge here occasionally from their toils, in the bosom of a soft and luxurious repose. From the midst of delightful bowers, refreshed by the pure mountain breeze, the eye looks over a romantic landscape full of poetical and historical associations. The Albanian Mountains; Tivoli, once the favorite residence of Horace and Mecænas; the vast, deserted, melancholy Campagna, with the Tiber winding through it, and St. Peter's dome swelling in the midst, the monument, as it were, over the grave of ancient Rome.

I assisted the Prince in researches which he was making among the classic ruins of his vicinity: his exertions were highly successful. Many wrecks of admirable statues and fragments of exquisite sculpture were dug

up; monuments of the taste and magnificence that reigned in the ancient Tusculan abodes. He had studded his villa and its grounds with statues, relievos, vases, and sarcophagi, thus retrieved from the bosom of the earth.

The mode of life pursued at the villa was delightfully serene, diversified by interesting occupations and elegant leisure. Every one passed the day according to his pleasure or pursuits; and we all assembled in a cheerful dinner-party at sunset.

It was on the fourth of November, a beautiful serene day, that we had assembled in the saloon at the sound of the first dinner-bell. The family were surprised at the absence of the Prince's confessor. They waited for him in vain, and at length placed themselves at table. They at first attributed his absence to his having prolonged his customary walk; and the early part of the dinner passed without any uneasiness. When the dessert was served, however, without his making his appearance, they began to feel anxious. They feared he might have been taken ill in some alley of the woods, or might have fallen into the hands of robbers. Not far from the villa, with the interval of a small valley, rose the mountains of the Abruzzi, the strong-hold of banditti. Indeed, the neighborhood had for some time past been infested by them; and Barbone, a notorious bandit chief, had often been met prowling about the solitudes of Tusculum. The daring enterprises of these ruffians were well known: the objects of their cupidity or vengeance were insecure even in

palaces. As yet they had respected the possessions of the Prince; but the idea of such dangerous spirits hovering about the neighborhood was sufficient to occasion alarm.

The fears of the company increased as evening closed in. The Prince ordered out forest guards and domestics with flambeaux to search for the confessor. They had not departed long when a slight noise was heard in the corridor of the ground-floor. The family were dining on the first floor, and the remaining domestics were occupied in attendance. There was no one on the ground-floor at this moment but the housekeeper, the laundress, and three field-laborers, who were resting themselves, and conversing with the women.

I heard the noise from below, and presuming it to be occasioned by the return of the absentee, I left the table and hastened down-stairs, eager to gain intelligence that might relieve the anxiety of the Prince and Princess. I had scarcely reached the last step, when I beheld before me a man dressed as a bandit; a carbine in his hand, and a stiletto and pistols in his belt. His countenance had a mingled expression of ferocity and trepidation: he sprang upon me, and exclaimed exultingly, "Ecco il principe!"

I saw at once into what hands I had fallen, but endeavored to summon up coolness and presence of mind. A glance towards the lower end of the corridor showed me several ruffians, clothed and armed in the same manner with the one who had seized me. They were guard-

ing the two females and the field-laborers. The robber, who held me firmly by the collar, demanded repeatedly whether or not I were the Prince: his object evidently was to carry off the Prince, and extort an immense ransom. He was enraged at receiving none but vague replies, for I felt the importance of misleading him.

A sudden thought struck me how I might extricate myself from his clutches. I was unarmed, it is true, but I was vigorous. His companions were at a distance. By a sudden exertion I might wrest myself from him, and spring up the staircase, whither he would not dare to follow me singly. The idea was put in practice as soon as conceived. The ruffian's throat was bare; with my right hand I seized him by it, with my left hand I grasped the arm which held the carbine. The suddenness of my attack took him completely unawares, and the strangling nature of my grasp paralyzed him. He choked and faltered. I felt his hand relaxing its hold, and was on the point of jerking myself away, and darting up the staircase, before he could recover himself, when I was suddenly seized by some one from behind.

I had to let go my grasp. The bandit, once released, fell upon me with fury, and gave me several blows with the butt end of his carbine, one of which wounded me severely in the forehead and covered me with blood. He took advantage of my being stunned to rifle me of my watch, and whatever valuables I had about my person.

When I recovered from the effect of the blow, I heard

the voice of the chief of the banditti, who exclaimed—"Quello e il principe; siamo contente; andiamo!" (It is the Prince; enough; let us be off.) The band immediately closed around me and dragged me out of the palace, bearing off the three laborers likewise.

I had no hat on, and the blood flowed from my wound; I managed to stanch it, however, with my pocket-handkerchief, which I bound round my forehead. The captain of the band conducted me in triumph, supposing me to be the Prince. We had gone some distance before he learnt his mistake from one of the laborers. His rage was terrible. It was too late to return to the villa and endeavor to retrieve his error, for by this time the alarm must have been given, and every one in arms. He darted at me a ferocious look,—swore I had deceived him, and caused him to miss his fortune,—and told me to prepare for death. The rest of the robbers were equally furious. I saw their hands upon their poniards, and I knew that death was seldom an empty threat with these ruffians. The laborers saw the peril into which their information had betrayed me, and eagerly assured the captain that I was a man for whom the Prince would pay a great ransom. This produced a pause. For my part, I cannot say that I had been much dismayed by their menaces. I mean not to make any boast of courage; but I have been so schooled to hardship during the late revolutions, and have beheld death around me in so many perilous and disastrous scenes,

that I have become in some measure callous to its terrors. The frequent hazard of life makes a man at length as reckless of it as a gambler of his money. To their threat of death, I replied, "that the sooner it was executed the better." This reply seemed to astonish the captain; and the prospect of ransom held out by the laborers had, no doubt, a still greater effect on him. He considered for a moment, assumed a calmer manner, and made a sign to his companions, who had remained waiting for my death-warrant. "Forward!" said he; "we will see about this matter by and by!"

We descended rapidly towards the road of La Molara, which leads to Rocca Priore. In the midst of this road is a solitary inn. The captain ordered the troop to halt at the distance of a pistol-shot from it, and enjoined profound silence. He approached the threshold alone, with noiseless steps. He examined the outside of the door very narrowly, and then returning precipitately, made a sign for the troop to continue its march in silence. It has since been ascertained, that this was one of those infamous inns which are the secret resorts of banditti. The innkeeper had an understanding with the captain, as he most probably had with the chiefs of the different bands. When any of the patroles and gens-d'armes were quartered at his house, the brigands were warned of it by a preconcerted signal on the door; when there was no such signal, they might enter with safety, and be sure of welcome.

After pursuing our road a little further, we struck off towards the woody mountains which envelop Rocca Priore. Our march was long and painful; with many circuits and windings; at length we clambered a steep ascent, covered with a thick forest; and when we had reached the centre, I was told to seat myself on the ground. No sooner had I done so, than, at a sign from their chief, the robbers surrounded me, and spreading their great cloaks from one to the other, formed a kind of pavilion of mantles, to which their bodies might be said to serve as columns. The captain then struck a light, and a flambeau was lit immediately. The mantles were extended to prevent the light of the flambeau from being seen through the forest. Anxious as was my situation, I could not look round upon this screen of dusky drapery, relieved by the bright colors of the robbers' garments, the gleaming of their weapons, and the variety of strong marked countenances, lit up by the flambeau, without admiring the picturesque effect of the scene. It was quite theatrical.

The captain now held an inkhorn, and giving me pen and paper, ordered me to write what he should dictate. I obeyed. It was a demand, couched in the style of robber eloquence, "that the Prince should send three thousand dollars for my ransom; or that my death should be the consequence of a refusal."

I knew enough of the desperate character of these beings to feel assured this was not an idle menace.

Their only mode of insuring attention to their demands is to make the infliction of the penalty inevitable. I saw at once, however, that the demand was preposterous, and made in improper language.

I told the captain so, and assured him that so extravagant a sum would never be granted.—"That I was neither a friend nor relative of the Prince, but a mere artist, employed to execute certain paintings. That I had nothing to offer as a ransom, but the price of my labors; if this were not sufficient, my life was at their disposal; it was a thing on which I set but little value."

I was the more hardy in my reply, because I saw that coolness and hardihood had an effect upon the robbers. It is true, as I finished speaking, the captain laid his hand upon his stiletto; but he restrained himself, and snatching the letter, folded it, and ordered me, in a peremptory tone, to address it to the Prince. He then dispatched one of the laborers with it to Tusculum, who promised to return with all possible speed.

The robbers now prepared themselves for sleep, and I was told that I might do the same. They spread their great cloaks on the ground, and lay down around me. One was stationed at a little distance to keep watch, and was relieved every two hours. The strangeness and wildness of this mountain bivouac among lawless beings, whose hands seemed ever ready to grasp the stiletto, and with whom life was so trivial and insecure, was enough to banish repose. The coldness of the earth, and of the dew,

however, had a still greater effect than mental causes in disturbing my rest. The airs wafted to these mountains from the distant Mediterranean diffused a great chilliness as the night advanced. An expedient suggested itself. I called one of my fellow-prisoners, the laborers, and made him lie down beside me. Whenever one of my limbs became chilled, I approached it to the robust limb of my neighbor, and borrowed some of his warmth. In this way I was able to obtain a little sleep.

Day at length dawned, and I was roused from my slumber by the voice of the chieftain. He desired me to rise and follow him. I obeyed. On considering his physiognomy attentively, it appeared a little softened. He even assisted me in scrambling up the steep forest, among rocks and brambles. Habit had made him a vigorous mountaineer; but I found it excessively toilsome to climb these rugged heights. We arrived at length at the summit of the mountain.

Here it was that I felt all the enthusiasm of my art suddenly awakened; and I forgot in an instant all my perils and fatigues at this magnificent view of the sunrise in the midst of the mountains of the Abruzzi. It was on these heights that Hannibal first pitched his camp, and pointed out Rome to his followers. The eye embraces a vast extent of country. The minor height of Tusculum, with its villas and its sacred ruins, lie below; the Sabine Hills and the Albanian Mountains stretch on either hand; and beyond Tusculum and Frascati spreads out the im-

mense Campagna, with its lines of tombs, and here and there a broken aqueduct stretching across it, and the towers and domes of the eternal city in the midst.

Fancy this scene lit up by the glories of a rising sun, and bursting upon my sight as I looked forth from among the majestic forests of the Abruzzi. Fancy, too, the savage foreground, made still more savage by groups of banditti, armed and dressed in their wild picturesque manner, and you will not wonder that the enthusiasm of a painter for a moment overpowered all his other feelings.

The banditti were astonished at my admiration of a scene which familiarity had made so common in their eyes. I took advantage of their halting at this spot, drew forth a quire of drawing-paper, and began to sketch the features of the landscape. The height on which I was seated was wild and solitary, separated from the ridge of Tusculum by a valley nearly three miles wide, though the distance appeared less from the purity of the atmosphere. This height was one of the favorite retreats of the banditti, commanding a look-out over the country; while at the same time it was covered with forests, and distant from the populous haunts of men.

While I was sketching, my attention was called off for a moment by the cries of birds, and the bleatings of sheep. I looked around, but could see nothing of the animals which uttered them. They were repeated, and appeared to come from the summits of the trees. On looking more narrowly, I perceived six of the robbers perched in

the tops of oaks, which grew on the breezy crest of the mountain, and commanded an uninterrupted prospect. They were keeping a look-out like so many vultures; casting their eyes into the depths of the valley below us; communicating with each other by signs, or holding discourse in sounds which might be mistaken by the wayfarer for the cries of hawks and crows, or the bleating of the mountain flocks. After they had reconnoitred the neighborhood, and finished their singular discourse, they descended from their airy perch, and returned to their prisoners. The captain posted three of them at three naked sides of the mountain, while he remained to guard us with what appeared his most trusty companion.

I had my book of sketches in my hand; he requested to see it, and after having run his eye over it, expressed himself convinced of the truth of my assertion that I was a painter. I thought I saw a gleam of good feeling dawning in him, and determined to avail myself of it. I knew that the worst of men have their good points and their accessible sides, if one would but study them carefully. Indeed, there is a singular mixture in the character of the Italian robber. With reckless ferocity he often mingles traits of kindness and good-humor. He is not always radically bad; but driven to his course of life by some unpremeditated crime, the effect of those sudden bursts of passion to which the Italian temperament is prone. This has compelled him to take to the mountains, or, as it is technically termed among them, "an-

dare in campagna." He has become a robber by profession; but, like a soldier, when not in action he can lay aside his weapon and his fierceness, and become like other men.

I took occasion, from the observations of the captain on my sketchings, to fall into conversation with him, and found him sociable and communicative. By degrees I became completely at my ease with him. I had fancied I perceived about him a degree of self-love, which I determined to make use of. I assumed an air of careless frankness, and told him, that, as an artist, I pretended to the power of judging of the physiognomy; that I thought I perceived something in his features and demeanor which announced him worthy of higher fortunes; that he was not formed to exercise the profession to which he had abandoned himself; that he had talents and qualities fitted for a nobler sphere of action; that he had but to change his course of life, and, in a legitimate career, the same courage and endowments which now made him an object of terror, would assure him the applause and admiration of society.

I had not mistaken my man; my discourse both touched and excited him. He seized my hand, pressed it, and replied with strong emotion, "You have guessed the truth; you have judged of me rightly." He remained for a moment silent; then, with a kind of effort, he resumed,—"I will tell you some particulars of my life, and you will perceive that it was the oppression of

others, rather than my own crimes, which drove me to the mountains. I sought to serve my fellow-men, and they have persecuted me from among them." We seated ourselves on the grass, and the robber gave me the following anecdotes of his history.

THE STORY OF THE BANDIT CHIEFTAIN.

I AM a native of the village of Prossedi. My father was easy enough in circumstances, and we lived peaceably and independently, cultivating our fields. All went on well with us, until a new chief of the Sbirri was sent to our village to take command of the police. He was an arbitrary fellow, prying into everything, and practising all sorts of vexations and oppressions in the discharge of his office. I was at that time eighteen years of age, and had a natural love of justice and good neighborhood. I had also a little education, and knew something of history, so as to be able to judge a little of men and their actions. All this inspired me with hatred for this paltry despot. My own family, also, became the object of his suspicion or dislike, and felt more than once the arbitrary abuse of his power. These things worked together in my mind, and I gasped after vengeance. My character was always ardent and energetic, and, acted upon by the love of justice, determined me, by one blow, to rid the country of the tyrant.

Full of my project, I rose one morning before peep of

day, and concealing a stiletto under my waistcoat,—here you see it!—(and he drew forth a long, keen poniard,) I lay in wait for him in the outskirts of the village. I knew all his haunts, and his habit of making his rounds and prowling about like a wolf in the gray of the morning. At length I met him, and attacked him with fury. He was armed, but I took him unawares, and was full of youth and vigor. I gave him repeated blows to make sure work, and laid him lifeless at my feet.

When I was satisfied that I had done for him, I returned with all haste to the village, but had the ill luck to meet two of the Sbirri as I entered it. They accosted me, and asked if I had seen their chief. I assumed an air of tranquillity, and told them I had not. They continued on their way, and within a few hours brought back the dead body to Prossedi. Their suspicions of me being already awakened, I was arrested and thrown into prison. Here I lay several weeks, when the Prince, who was Seigneur of Prossedi, directed judicial proceedings against me. I was brought to trial, and a witness was produced, who pretended to have seen me flying with precipitation not far from the bleeding body; and so I was condemned to the galleys for thirty years.

"Curse on such laws!" vociferated the bandit, foaming with rage: "Curse on such a government! and ten thousand curses on the Prince who caused me to be adjudged so rigorously, while so many other Roman Princes harbor and protect assassins a thousand times more culpa-

ble! What had I done but what was inspired by a love of justice and my country? Why was my act more culpable than that of Brutus, when he sacrificed Cæsar to the cause of liberty and justice?"

There was something at once both lofty and ludicrous in the rhapsody of this robber chief, thus associating himself with one of the great names of antiquity. It showed, however, that he had at least the merit of knowing the remarkable facts in the history of his country. He became more calm, and resumed his narrative.

"I was conducted to Civita Vecchia in fetters. My heart was burning with rage. I had been married scarce six months to a woman whom I passionately loved, and who was pregnant. My family was in despair. For a long time I made unsuccessful efforts to break my chain. At length I found a morsel of iron, which I hid carefully, and endeavored, with a pointed flint, to fashion it into a kind of file. I occupied myself in this work during the night-time, and when it was finished, I made out, after a long time, to sever one of the rings of my chain. My flight was successful.

"I wandered for several weeks in the mountains which surround Prossedi, and found means to inform my wife of the place where I was concealed. She came often to see me. I had determined to put myself at the head of an armed band. She endeavored, for a long time, to dissuade me, but finding my resolution fixed, she at length united in my project of vengeance, and brought me, her-

self, my poniard. By her means I communicated with several brave fellows of the neighboring villages, whom I knew to be ready to take to the mountains, and only panting for an opportunity to exercise their daring spirits. We soon formed a combination, procured arms, and we have had ample opportunities of revenging ourselves for the wrongs and injuries which most of us have suffered. Everything has succeeded with us until now; and had it not been for our blunder in mistaking you for the Prince, our fortunes would have been made."

Here the robber concluded his story. He had talked himself into complete companionship, and assured me he no longer bore me any grudge for the error of which I had been the innocent cause. He even professed a kindness for me, and wished me to remain some time with them. He promised to give me a sight of certain grottos which they occupied beyond Velletri, and whither they resorted during the intervals of their expeditions.

He assured me that they led a jovial life there; had plenty of good cheer; slept on beds of moss; and were waited upon by young and beautiful females, whom I might take for models.

I confess I felt my curiosity roused by his descriptions of the grottos and their inhabitants: they realized those scenes in robber story which I had always looked upon as mere creations of the fancy. I should gladly have accepted his invitation, and paid a visit to these caverns, could I have felt more secure in my company.

I began to find my situation less painful. I had evidently propitiated the good-will of the chieftain, and hoped that he might release me for a moderate ransom. A new alarm, however, awaited me. While the captain was looking out with impatience for the return of the messenger, who had been sent to the Prince, the sentinel posted on the side of the mountain facing the plain of La Molara came running towards us. "We are betrayed!" exclaimed he. "The police of Frascati are after us. A party of carabineers have just stopped at the inn below the mountain." Then, laying his hand on his stiletto, he swore, with a terrible oath, that if they made the least movement towards the mountain, my life and the lives of my fellow-prisoners should answer for it.

The chieftain resumed all his ferocity of demeanor, and approved of what his companion said; but when the latter had returned to his post, he turned to me with a softened air: "I must act as chief," said he, "and humor my dangerous subalterns. It is a law with us to kill our prisoners rather than suffer them to be rescued; but do not be alarmed. In case we are surprised, keep by me; fly with us, and I will consider myself responsible for your life."

There was nothing very consolatory in this arrangement, which would have placed me between two dangers. I scarcely knew, in case of flight, from which I should have the most to apprehend, the carbines of the pursuers,

or the stilettos of the pursued. I remained silent, however, and endeavored to maintain a look of tranquillity.

For an hour was I kept in this state of peril and anxiety. The robbers, crouching among their leafy coverts, kept an eagle watch upon the carabineers below, as they loitered about the inn; sometimes lolling about the portal; sometimes disappearing for several minutes; then sallying out, examining their weapons, pointing in different directions, and apparently asking questions about the neighborhood. Not a movement, a gesture, was lost upon the keen eyes of the brigands. At length we were relieved from our apprehensions. The carabineers having finished their refreshment, seized their arms, continued along the valley towards the great road, and gradually left the mountain behind them. "I felt almost certain," said the chief, "that they could not be sent after us. They know too well how prisoners have fared in our hands on similar occasions. Our laws in this respect are inflexible, and are necessary for our safety. If we once flinched from them, there would no longer be such a thing as a ransom to be procured."

There were no signs yet of the messenger's return. I was preparing to resume my sketching, when the captain drew a quire of paper from his knapsack. "Come," said he, laughing, "you are a painter,—take my likeness. The leaves of your portfolio are small,—draw it on this." I gladly consented, for it was a study that seldom presents itself to a painter. I recollected that Salvator Rosa in

his youth had voluntarily sojourned for a time among the banditti of Calabria, and had filled his mind with the savage scenery and savage associates by which he was surrounded. I seized my pencil with enthusiasm at the thought. I found the captain the most docile of subjects, and, after various shiftings of position, placed him in an attitude to my mind.

Picture to yourself a stern muscular figure, in fanciful bandit costume; with pistols and poniard in belt; his brawny neck bare; a handkerchief loosely thrown around it, and the two ends in front strung with rings of all kinds, the spoils of travellers; relics and medals hanging on his breast; his hat decorated with various colored ribbons; his vest and short breeches of bright colors, and finely embroidered; his legs in buskins or leggins. Fancy him on a mountain height, among wild rocks and rugged oaks, leaning on his carbine, as if meditating some exploit; while far below are beheld villages and villas, the scenes of his maraudings, with the wide Campagna dimly extending in the distance.

The robber was pleased with the sketch, and seemed to admire himself upon paper. I had scarcely finished, when the laborer arrived who had been sent for my ransom. He had reached Tusculum two hours after midnight. He had brought me a letter from the Prince, who was in bed at the time of his arrival. As I had predicted, he treated the demand as extravagant, but offered five hundred dollars for my ransom. Having no money by him

at the moment, he had sent a note for the amount, payable to whomsoever should conduct me safe and sound to Rome. I presented the note of hand to the chieftain; he received it with a shrug. "Of what use are notes of hand to us?" said he. "Who can we send with you to Rome to receive it? We are all marked men; known and described at every gate, and military post, and village church-door. No; we must have gold and silver; let the sum be paid in cash, and you shall be restored to liberty."

The captain again placed a sheet of paper before me to communicate his determination to the Prince. When I had finished the letter, and took the sheet from the quire, I found on the opposite side of it the portrait which I had just been tracing. I was about to tear it off and give it to the chief.

"Hold!" said he, "let it go to Rome; let them see what kind of a looking fellow I am. Perhaps the Prince and his friends may form as good an opinion of me from my face as you have done."

This was said sportively, yet it was evident there was vanity lurking at the bottom. Even this wary, distrustful chief of banditti forgot for a moment his usual foresight and precaution, in the common wish to be admired. He never reflected what use might be made of this portrait in his pursuit and conviction.

The letter was folded and directed, and the messenger departed again for Tusculum. It was now eleven o'clock

in the morning, and as yet we had eaten nothing. In spite of all my anxiety, I began to feel a craving appetite. I was glad therefore to hear the captain talk something about eating. He observed that for three days and nights they had been lurking about among rocks and woods, meditating their expedition to Tusculum, during which time all their provisions had been exhausted. He should now take measures to procure a supply. Leaving me, therefore, in charge of his comrade, in whom he appeared to have implicit confidence, he departed, assuring me that in less than two hours I should make a good dinner. Where it was to come from was an enigma to me, though it was evident these beings had their secret friends and agents throughout the country.

Indeed the inhabitants of these mountains, and of the valleys which they embosom, are a rude, half-civilized set. The towns and villages among the forests of the Abruzzi, shut up from the rest of the world, are almost like savage dens. It is wonderful that such rude abodes, so little known and visited, should be embosomed in the midst of one of the most travelled and civilized countries of Europe. Among these regions the robber prowls unmolested; not a mountaineer hesitates to give him secret harbor and assistance. The shepherds, however, who tend their flocks among the mountains, are the favorite emissaries of the robbers, when they would send messages down to the valleys either for ransom or supplies.

The shepherds of the Abruzzi are as wild as the scenes they frequent. They are clad in a rude garb of black or brown sheepskin; they have high conical hats, and coarse sandals of cloth bound around their legs with thongs, similar to those worn by the robbers. They carry long staves, on which, as they lean, they form picturesque objects in the lonely landscape, and they are followed by their ever-constant companion, the dog. They are a curious, questioning set, glad at any time to relieve the monotony of their solitude by the conversation of the passer-by; and the dog will lend an attentive ear, and put on as sagacious and inquisitive a look as his master.

But I am wandering from my story. I was now left alone with one of the robbers, the confidential companion of the chief. He was the youngest and most vigorous of the band; and though his countenance had something of that dissolute fierceness which seems natural to this desperate, lawless mode of life, yet there were traces of manly beauty about it. As an artist I could not but admire it. I had remarked in him an air of abstraction and reverie, and at times a movement of inward suffering and impatience. He now sat on the ground, his elbows on his knees, his head resting between his clenched fists, and his eyes fixed on the earth with an expression of sadness and bitter rumination. I had grown familiar with him from repeated conversations, and had found him superior in mind to the rest of the band. I was

anxious to seize any opportunity of sounding the feelings of these singular beings. I fancied I read in the countenance of this one traces of self-condemnation and remorse; and the ease with which I had drawn forth the confidence of the chieftain, encouraged me to hope the same with his follower.

After a little preliminary conversation, I ventured to ask him if he did not feel regret at having abandoned his family, and taken to this dangerous profession. "I feel," replied he, "but one regret, and that will end only with my life."

As he said this, he pressed his clenched fists upon his bosom, drew his breath through his set teeth, and added, with a deep emotion, "I have something within here that stifles me; it is like a burning iron consuming my very heart. I could tell you a miserable story—but not now—another time."

He relapsed into his former position, and sat with his head between his hands, muttering to himself in broken ejaculations, and what appeared at times to be curses and maledictions. I saw he was not in a mood to be disturbed, so I left him to himself. In a little while the exhaustion of his feelings, and probably the fatigues he had undergone in this expedition, began to produce drowsiness. He struggled with it for a time, but the warmth and stillness of mid-day made it irresistible, and he at length stretched himself upon the herbage and fell asleep.

I now beheld a chance of escape within my reach. My guard lay before me at my mercy. His vigorous limbs relaxed by sleep—his bosom open for the blow—his carbine slipped from his nerveless grasp, and lying by his side—his stiletto half out of the pocket in which it was usually carried. Two only of his comrades were in sight, and those at a considerable distance on the edge of the mountain, their backs turned to us, and their attention occupied in keeping a lookout upon the plain. Through a strip of intervening forest, and at the foot of a steep descent, I beheld the village of Rocca Priore. To have secured the carbine of the sleeping brigand; to have seized upon his poniard, and have plunged it in his heart, would have been the work of an instant. Should he die without noise, I might dart through the forest, and down to Rocca Priori before my flight might be discovered. In case of alarm, I should still have a fair start of the robbers, and a chance of getting beyond the reach of their shot.

Here then was an opportunity for both escape and vengeance; perilous indeed, but powerfully tempting. Had my situation been more critical, I could not have resisted it. I reflected, however, for a moment. The attempt, if successful, would be followed by the sacrifice of my two fellow-prisoners, who were sleeping profoundly, and could not be awakened in time to escape. The laborer who had gone after the ransom might also fall a victim to the rage of the robbers, without the money which he

brought being saved. Besides, the conduct of the chief towards me made me feel confident of speedy deliverance. These reflections overcame the first powerful impulse, and I calmed the turbulent agitation which it had awakened.

I again took out my materials for drawing, and amused myself with sketching the magnificent prospect. It was now about noon, and everything had sunk into repose, like the sleeping bandit before me. The noontide stillness that reigned over these mountains, the vast landscape below gleaming with distant towns, and dotted with various habitations and signs of life, yet all so silent, had a powerful effect upon my mind. The intermediate valleys, too, which lie among the mountains, have a peculiar air of solitude. Few sounds are heard at mid-day to break the quiet of the scene. Sometimes the whistle of a solitary muleteer, lagging with his lazy animal along the road which winds through the centre of the valley; sometimes the faint piping of a shepherd's reed from the side of the mountain, or sometimes the bell of an ass slowly pacing along, followed by a monk with bare feet, and bare, shining head, and carrying provisions to his convent.

I had continued to sketch for some time among my sleeping companions, when at length I saw the captain of the band approaching, followed by a peasant leading a mule, on which was a well-filled sack. I at first apprehended that this was some new prey fallen into the hands of the robber; but the contented look of the peasant soon

relieved me, and I was rejoiced to hear that it was our promised repast. The brigands now came running from the three sides of the mountain, having the quick scent of vultures. Every one busied himself in unloading the mule, and relieving the sack of its contents.

The first thing that made its appearance was an enormous ham, of a color and plumpness that would have inspired the pencil of Teniers; it was followed by a large cheese, a bag of boiled chestnuts, a little barrel of wine, and a quantity of good household bread. Everything was arranged on the grass with a degree of symmetry; and the captain, presenting me with his knife, requested me to help myself. We all seated ourselves around the viands, and nothing was heard for a time but the sound of vigorous mastication, or the gurgling of the barrel of wine as it revolved briskly about the circle. My long fasting, and mountain air and exercise, had given me a keen appetite; and never did repast appear to me more excellent or picturesque.

From time to time one of the band was dispatched to keep a lookout upon the plain. No enemy was at hand, and the dinner was undisturbed. The peasant received nearly three times the value of his provisions, and set off down the mountain highly satisfied with his bargain. I felt invigorated by the hearty meal I had made, and notwithstanding that the wound I had received the evening before was painful, yet I could not but feel extremely interested and gratified by the singular scenes contin-

ually presented to me. Everything was picturesque about these wild beings and their haunts. Their bivouacs; their groups on guard; their indolent noontide repose on the mountain-brow; their rude repast on the herbage among rocks and trees; everything presented a study for a painter: but it was towards the approach of evening that I felt the highest enthusiasm awakened.

The setting sun, declining beyond the vast Campagna, shed its rich yellow beams on the woody summit of the Abruzzi. Several mountains crowned with snow shone brilliantly in the distance, contrasting their brightness with others, which, thrown into shade, assumed deep tints of purple and violet. As the evening advanced, the landscape darkened into a sterner character. The immense solitude around; the wild mountains broken into rocks and precipices, intermingled with vast oaks, corks, and chestnuts; and the groups of banditti in the foreground, reminded me of the savage scenes of Salvator Rosa.

To beguile the time, the captain proposed to his comrades to spread before me their jewels and cameos, as I must doubtless be a judge of such articles, and able to form an estimate of their value. He set the example, the others followed it; and in a few moments I saw the grass before me sparkling with jewels and gems that would have delighted the eyes of an antiquary or a fine lady.

Among them were several precious jewels and antique

intaglios and cameos of great value, the spoils, doubtless, of travellers of distinction. I found that they were in the habit of selling their booty in the frontier towns; but as these, in general, were thinly and poorly peopled, and little frequented by travellers, they could offer no market for such valuable articles of taste and luxury. I suggested to them the certainty of their readily obtaining great prices for these gems among the rich strangers with whom Rome was thronged.

The impression made upon their greedy minds was immediately apparent. One of the band, a young man, and the least known, requested permission of the captain to depart the following day, in disguise, for Rome, for the purpose of traffic, promising, on the faith of a bandit, (a sacred pledge among them), to return in two days to any place that he might appoint. The captain consented, and a curious scene took place; the robbers crowded round him eagerly, confiding to him such of their jewels as they wished to dispose of, and giving him instructions what to demand. There was much bargaining and exchanging and selling of trinkets among them; and I behold my watch, which had a chain and valuable seals, purchased by the young robber-merchant of the ruffian who had plundered me, for sixty dollars. I now conceived a faint hope, that if it went to Rome, I might somehow or other regain possession of it.*

* The hopes of the artist were not disappointed: the robber was stopped at one of the gates of Rome. Something in his looks or deport-

In the meantime day declined, and no messenger returned from Tusculum. The idea of passing another night in the woods was extremely disheartening, for I began to be satisfied with what I had seen of robber-life. The chieftain now ordered his men to follow him, that he might station them at their posts; adding, that, if the messenger did not return before night, they must shift their quarters to some other place.

I was again left alone with the young bandit who had before guarded me; he had the same gloomy air and haggard eye, with now and then a bitter sardonic smile. I determined to probe this ulcerated heart, and reminded him of a kind promise he had given me to tell me the cause of his suffering. It seemed to me as if these troubled spirits were glad of any opportunity to disburden themselves, and of having some fresh, undiseased mind, with which they could communicate. I had hardly made the request, when he seated himself by my side, and gave me his story in, as near as I can recollect, the following words.

ment had excited suspicion. He was searched, and the valuable trinkets found on him sufficiently evinced his character. On applying to the police, the artist's watch was returned to him.

THE STORY OF THE YOUNG ROBBER.

I WAS born in the little town of Frosinone, which lies at the skirts of the Abruzzi. My father had made a little property in trade, and gave me some education, as he intended me for the Church; but I had kept gay company too much to relish the cowl, so I grew up a loiterer about the place. I was a heedless fellow, a little quarrelsome on occasion, but good-humored in the main; so I made my way very well for a time, until I fell in love. There lived in our town a surveyor or land-bailiff of the Prince, who had a young daughter, a beautiful girl of sixteen; she was looked upon as something better than the common run of our townsfolk, and was kept almost entirely at home. I saw her occasionally, and became madly in love with her—she looked so fresh and tender, and so different from the sunburnt females to whom I had been accustomed.

As my father kept me in money, I always dressed well, and took all opportunities of showing myself off to advantage in the eyes of the little beauty. I used to see her at church; and as I could play a little upon the guitar,

I gave a tune sometimes under her window of an evening; and I tried to have interviews with her in her father's vineyard, not far from the town, where she sometimes walked. She was evidently pleased with me, but she was young and shy; and her father kept a strict eye upon her, and took alarm at my attentions, for he had a bad opinion of me, and looked for a better match for his daughter. I became furious at the difficulties thrown in my way, having been accustomed always to easy success among the women, being considered one of the smartest young fellows of the place.

Her father brought home a suitor for her,—a rich farmer from a neighboring town. The wedding-day was appointed, and preparations were making. I got sight of her at the window, and I thought she looked sadly at me. I determined the match should not take place, cost what it might. I met her intended bridegroom in the market-place, and could not restrain the expression of my rage. A few hot words passed between us, when I drew my stiletto and stabbed him to the heart. I fled to a neighboring church for refuge, and with a little money I obtained absolution, but I did not dare to venture from my asylum.

At that time our captain was forming his troop. He had known me from boyhood; and hearing of my situation, came to me in secret, and made such offers, that I agreed to enroll myself among his followers. Indeed, I had more than once thought of taking to this mode of

life, having known several brave fellows of the mountains, who used to spend their money freely among us youngsters of the town. I accordingly left my asylum late one night, repaired to the appointed place of meeting, took the oaths prescribed, and became one of the troop. We were for some time in a distant part of the mountains, and our wild adventurous kind of life hit my fancy wonderfully, and diverted my thoughts. At length they returned with all their violence to the recollection of Rosetta; the solitude in which I often found myself gave me time to brood over her image; and, as I have kept watch at night over our sleeping camp in the mountains, my feelings have been aroused almost to a fever.

At length we shifted our ground, and determined to make a descent upon the road between Terracina and Naples. In the course of our expedition we passed a day or two in the woody mountains which rise above Frosinone. I cannot tell you how I felt when I looked down upon that place, and distinguished the residence of Rosetta. I determined to have an interview with her;—but to what purpose? I could not expect that she would quit her home, and accompany me in my hazardous life among the mountains. She had been brought up too tenderly for that; when I looked upon the women who were associated with some of our troop, I could not have borne the thoughts of her being their companion. All return to my former life was likewise hopeless, for a

price was set upon my head. Still I determined to see her; the very hazard and fruitlessness of the thing made me furious to accomplish it.

About three weeks since, I persuaded our captain to draw down to the vicinity of Frosinone, suggesting the chance of entrapping some of its principal inhabitants, and compelling them to a ransom. We were lying in ambush towards evening, not far from the vineyard of Rosetta's father. I stole quietly from my companions, and drew near to reconnoitre the place of her frequent walks. How my heart beat when among the vines I beheld the gleaming of a white dress! I knew it must be Rosetta's; it being rare for any female of that place to dress in white. I advanced secretly and without noise, until, putting aside the vines, I stood suddenly before her. She uttered a piercing shriek, but I seized her in my arms, put my hand upon her mouth, and conjured her to be silent. I poured out all the frenzy of my passion; offered to renounce my mode of life; to put my fate in her hands; to fly where we might live in safety together. All that I could say or do would not pacify her. Instead of love, horror and affright seemed to have taken possession of her breast. She struggled partly from my grasp, and filled the air with her cries.

In an instant the captain and the rest of my companions were around us. I would have given anything at that moment had she been safe out of our hands, and in her father's house. It was too late. The captain pro-

nounced her a prize, and ordered that she should be borne to the mountains. I represented to him that she was my prize; that I had a previous claim to her; and I mentioned my former attachment. He sneered bitterly in reply; observed that brigands had no business with village intrigues, and that, according to the laws of the troop, all spoils of the kind were determined by lot. Love and jealousy were raging in my heart, but I had to choose between obedience and death. I surrendered her to the captain, and we made for the mountains.

She was overcome by affright, and her steps were so feeble and faltering that it was necessary to support her. I could not endure the idea that my comrades should touch her, and assuming a forced tranquillity, begged she might be confided to me, as one to whom she was more accustomed. The captain regarded me, for a moment, with a searching look, but I bore it without flinching, and he consented. I took her in my arms, she was almost senseless. Her head rested on my shoulder; I felt her breath on my face, and it seemed to fan the flame which devoured me. Oh God! to have this glowing treasure in my arms, and yet to think it was not mine!

We arrived at the foot of the mountain; I ascended it with difficulty, particularly where the woods were thick, but I would not relinquish my delicious burden. I reflected with rage, however, that I must soon do so. The thoughts that so delicate a creature must be abandoned to my rude companions maddened me. I felt tempted,

the stiletto in my hand, to cut my way through them all, and bear her off in triumph. I scarcely conceived the idea before I saw its rashness; but my brain was fevered with the thought that any but myself should enjoy her charms. I endeavored to outstrip my companions by the quickness of my movements, and to get a little distance ahead, in case any favorable opportunity of escape should present. Vain effort! The voice of the captain suddenly ordered a halt. I trembled, but had to obey. The poor girl partly opened a languid eye, but was without strength or motion. I laid her upon the grass. The captain darted on me a terrible look of suspicion, and ordered me to scour the woods with my companions in search of some shepherd, who might be sent to her father's to demand a ransom.

I saw at once the peril. To resist with violence was certain death, but to leave her alone, in the power of the captain—I spoke out then with a fervor, inspired by my passion and by despair. I reminded the captain that I was the first to seize her; that she was my prize; and that my previous attachment to her ought to make her sacred among my companions. I insisted, therefore, that he should pledge me his word to respect her, otherwise I would refuse obedience to his orders. His only reply was to cock his carbine, and at the signal my comrades did the same. They laughed with cruelty at my impotent rage. What could I do? I felt the madness of resistance. I was menaced on all hands, and my compan-

ions obliged me to follow them. She remained alone with the chief—yes, alone—and almost lifeless!—

Here the robber paused in his recital, overpowered by his emotions. Great drops of sweat stood on his forehead; he panted rather than breathed; his brawny bosom rose and fell like the waves of the troubled sea. When he had become a little calm, he continued his recital.

I was not long in finding a shepherd, said he. I ran with the rapidity of a deer, eager, if possible, to get back before what I dreaded might take place. I had left my companions far behind, and I rejoined them before they had reached one half the distance I had made. I hurried them back to the place where we had left the captain. As we approached, I beheld him seated by the side of Rosetta. His triumphant look, and the desolate condition of the unfortunate girl, left me no doubt of her fate. I know not how I restrained my fury.

It was with extreme difficulty, and by guiding her hand, that she was made to trace a few characters, requesting her father to send three hundred dollars as her ransom. The letter was dispatched by the shepherd. When he was gone, the chief turned sternly to me. "You have set an example," said he, "of mutiny and self-will, which, if indulged, would be ruinous to the troop. Had I treated you as our laws require, this bullet would have been driven through your brain. But you are an old friend. I have borne patiently with your

fury and your folly. I have even protected you from a foolish passion that would have unmanned you. As to this girl, the laws of our association must have their course." So saying, he gave his commands: lots were drawn, and the helpless girl was abandoned to the troop.

Here the robber paused again, panting with fury, and it was some moments before he could resume his story.

Hell, said he, was raging in my heart. I beheld the impossibility of avenging myself; and I felt that, according to the articles in which we stood bound to one another, the captain was in the right. I rushed with frenzy from the place; I threw myself upon the earth; tore up the grass with my hands; and beat my head and gnashed my teeth in agony and rage. When at length I returned, I beheld the wretched victim, pale, dishevelled, her dress torn and disordered. An emotion of pity, for a moment, subdued my fiercer feelings. I bore her to the foot of a tree, and leaned her gently against it. I took my gourd, which was filled with wine, and applying it to her lips, endeavored to make her swallow a little. To what a condition was she reduced! she, whom I had once seen the pride of Frosinone, whom but a short time before I had beheld sporting in her father's vineyard, so fresh, and beautiful, and happy! Her teeth were clenched; her eyes fixed on the ground; her form without motion, and in a state of absolute insensibility. I hung over her in an agony of recollection at all that she

had been, and of anguish of what I now beheld her. I darted around a look of horror at my companions, who seemed like so many fiends exulting in the downfall of an angel; and I felt a horror at being myself their accomplice.

The captain, always suspicious, saw, with his usual penetration, what was passing within me, and ordered me to go upon the ridge of the woods, to keep a look-out over the neighborhood, and await the return of the shepherd. I obeyed, of course, stifling the fury that raged within me, though I felt, for the moment, that he was my most deadly foe.

On my way, however, a ray of reflection came across my mind. I perceived that the captain was but following, with strictness, the terrible laws to which we had sworn fidelity; that the passion by which I had been blinded might, with justice, have been fatal to me, but for his forbearance; that he had penetrated my soul, and had taken precautions, by sending me out of the way, to prevent my committing any excess in my anger. From that instant I felt that I was capable of pardoning him.

Occupied with these thoughts, I arrived at the foot of the mountain. The country was solitary and secure, and in a short time I beheld the shepherd at a distance crossing the plain. I hastened to meet him. He had obtained nothing. He had found the father plunged in the deepest distress. He had read the letter with violent emotion, and then, calming himself with a sudden exer-

tion, he had replied coldly: "My daughter has been dishonored by those wretches; let her be returned without ransom,—or let her die!"

I shuddered at this reply. I knew that, according to the laws of our troop, her death was inevitable. Our oaths required it. I felt, nevertheless, that, not having been able to have her to myself, I could be her executioner!

The robber again paused with agitation. I sat musing upon his last frightful words, which proved to what excess the passions may be carried when escaped from all moral restraint. There was a horrible verity in this story that reminded me of some of the tragic fictions of Dante.

We now come to a fatal moment, resumed the bandit. After the report of the shepherd, I returned with him, and the chieftain received from his lips the refusal of her father. At a signal which we all understood, we followed him to some distance from the victim. He there pronounced her sentence of death. Every one stood ready to execute his orders, but I interfered. I observed that there was something due to pity as well as to justice; that I was as ready as any one to approve the implacable law, which was to serve as a warning to all those who hesitated to pay the ransoms demanded for our prisoners; but that though the sacrifice was proper, it ought to be made without cruelty. 'The night is approaching,' continued I; 'she will soon be wrapped in

sleep; let her then be dispatched. All I now claim on the score of former kindness is, let me strike the blow. I will do it as surely, though more tenderly than another.' Several raised their voices against my proposition, but the captain imposed silence on them. He told me I might conduct her into a thicket at some distance, and he relied upon my promise.

I hastened to seize upon my prey. There was a forlorn kind of triumph at having at length become her exclusive possessor. I bore her off into the thickness of the forest. She remained in the same state of insensibility or stupor. I was thankful that she did not recollect me, for had she once murmured my name, I should have been overcome. She slept at length in the arms of him who was to poniard her. Many were the conflicts I underwent before I could bring myself to strike the blow. But my heart had become sore by the recent conflicts it had undergone, and I dreaded lest, by procrastination, some other should become her executioner. When her repose had continued for some time, I separated myself gently from her, that I might not disturb her sleep, and seizing suddenly my poniard, plunged it into her bosom. A painful and concentrated murmur, but without any convulsive movement, accompanied her last sigh.—So perished this unfortunate!

He ceased to speak. I sat, horror-struck, covering my face with my hands, seeking, as it were, to hide from

myself the frightful images he had presented to my mind. I was roused from this silence by the voice of the captain: "You sleep," said he, "and it is time to be off. Come, we must abandon this height, as night is setting in, and the messenger is not returned. I will post some one on the mountain edge to conduct him to the place where we shall pass the night."

This was no agreeable news to me. I was sick at heart with the dismal story I had heard. I was harassed and fatigued, and the sight of the banditti began to grow insupportable to me.

The captain assembled his comrades. We rapidly descended the forest, which we had mounted with so much difficulty in the morning, and soon arrived in what appeared to be a frequented road. The robbers proceeded with great caution, carrying their guns cocked, and looking on every side with wary and suspicious eyes. They were apprehensive of encountering the civic patrole. We left Rocca Priori behind us. There was a fountain near by, and as I was excessively thirsty, I begged permission to stop and drink. The captain himself went and brought me water in his hat. We pursued our route, when, at the extremity of an alley which crossed the road, I perceived a female on horseback, dressed in white. She was alone. I recollected the fate of the poor girl in the story, and trembled for her safety.

One of the brigands saw her at the same instant, and

plunging into the bushes, he ran precipitately in the direction towards her. Stopping on the border of the alley, he put one knee to the ground, presented his carbine ready to menace her, or to shoot her horse if she attempted to fly, and in this way awaited her approach. I kept my eyes fixed on her with intense anxiety. I felt tempted to shout and warn her of her danger, though my own destruction would have been the consequence. It was awful to see this tiger crouching ready for a bound, and the poor innocent victim unconsciously near him. Nothing but a mere chance could save her. To my joy the chance turned in her favor. She seemed almost accidentally to take an opposite path, which led outside of the woods, where the robber dared not venture. To this casual deviation she owed her safety.

I could not imagine why the captain of the band had ventured to such a distance from the height on which he had placed the sentinel to watch the return of the messenger. He seemed himself anxious at the risk to which he exposed himself. His movements were rapid and uneasy; I could scarce keep pace with him. At length, after three hours of what might be termed a forced march, we mounted the extremity of the same woods, the summit of which we had occupied during the day; and I learnt with satisfaction that we had reached our quarters for the night. "You must be fatigued," said the chieftain; "but it was necessary to survey the environs so as not to be surprised during the night. Had we met with the

famous civic guard of Rocca Priori, you would have seen fine sport." Such was the indefatigable precaution and forethought of this robber chief, who really gave continual evidence of military talent.

The night was magnificent. The moon, rising above the horizon in a cloudless sky, faintly lit up the grand features of the mountain, while lights twinkling here and there, like terrestrial stars in the wide dusky expanse of the landscape, betrayed the lonely cabins of the shepherds. Exhausted by fatigue, and by the many agitations I had experienced, I prepared to sleep, soothed by the hope of approaching deliverance. The captain ordered his companions to collect some dry moss; he arranged with his own hands a kind of mattress and pillow of it, and gave me his ample mantle as a covering. I could not but feel both surprised and gratified by such unexpected attentions on the part of this benevolent cutthroat; for there is nothing more striking than to find the ordinary charities, which are matters of course in common life, flourishing by the side of such stern and sterile crime. It is like finding tender flowers and fresh herbage of the valley growing among the rocks and cinders of the volcano.

Before I fell asleep I had some further discourse with the captain, who seemed to feel great confidence in me. He referred to our previous conversation of the morning; told me he was weary of his hazardous profession; that he had acquired sufficient property, and was anxious to

return to the world, and lead a peaceful life in the bosom of his family. He wished to know whether it was not in my power to procure for him a passport to the United States of America. I applauded his good intentions, and promised to do everything in my power to promote its success. We then parted for the night. I stretched myself upon my couch of moss, which, after my fatigues, felt like a bed of down; and, sheltered by the robber-mantle from all humidity, I slept soundly, without waking, until the signal to arise.

It was nearly six o'clock, and the day was just dawning. As the place where we had passed the night was too much exposed, we moved up into the thickness of the woods. A fire was kindled. While there was any flame, the mantles were again extended round it; but when nothing remained but glowing cinders, they were lowered, and the robbers seated themselves in a circle.

The scene before me reminded me of some of those described by Homer. There wanted only the victim on the coals, and the sacred knife to cut off the succulent parts, and distribute them around. My companions might have rivalled the grim warriors of Greece. In place of the noble repasts, however, of Achilles and Agamemnon, I beheld displayed on the grass the remains of the ham which had sustained so vigorous an attack on the preceding evening, accompanied by the relics of the bread, cheese, and wine. We had scarcely commenced our frugal breakfast, when I heard again an imitation of the

bleating of sheep, similar to what I had heard the day before. The captain answered it in the same tone. Two men were soon after seen descending from the woody height, where we had passed the preceding evening. On nearer approach, they proved to be the sentinel and the messenger. The captain rose, and went to meet them. He made a signal for his comrades to join him. They had a short conference, and then returning to me with great eagerness, "Your ransom is paid," said he, "you are free!"

Though I had anticipated deliverance, I cannot tell you what a rush of delight these tidings gave me. I cared not to finish my repast, but prepared to depart. The captain took me by the hand, requested permission to write to me, and begged me not to forget the passport. I replied, that I hoped to be of effectual service to him, and that I relied on his honor to return the Prince's note for five hundred dollars, now that the cash was paid. He regarded me for a moment with surprise, then seeming to recollect himself, "*E giusto,*" said he, "*eccolo—adio!*"* He delivered me the note, pressed my hand once more, and we separated. The laborers were permitted to follow me, and we resumed with joy our road toward Tusculum.

The Frenchman ceased to speak. The party continued,

* It is just—there it is—adieu!

for a few moments, to pace the shore in silence. The story had made a deep impression, particularly on the Venetian lady. At that part which related to the young girl of Frosinone, she was violently affected. Sobs broke from her; she clung closer to her husband, and as she looked up to him as if for protection, the moonbeams shining on her beautifully fair countenance, showed it paler than usual, while tears glittered in her fine dark eyes.

"*Corragio, mia vita!*" said he, as he gently and fondly tapped the white hand that lay upon his arm.

The party now returned to the inn, and separated for the night. The fair Venetian, though of the sweetest temperament, was half out of humor with the Englishman, for a certain slowness of faith which he had evinced throughout the whole evening. She could not understand this dislike to "humbug," as he termed it, which held a kind of sway over him, and seemed to control his opinions and his very actions.

"I'll warrant," said she to her husband, as they retired for the night,—"I'll warrant, with all his affected indifference, this Englishman's heart would quake at the very sight of a bandit."

Her husband gently, and good-humoredly, checked her.

"I have no patience with these Englishmen," said she, as she got into bed,—"they are so cold and insensible!"

THE ADVENTURE OF THE ENGLISHMAN.

IN the morning all was bustle in the inn at Terracina. The procaccio had departed at daybreak on its route towards Rome, but the Englishman was yet to start, and the departure of an English equipage is always enough to keep an inn in a bustle. On this occasion there was more than usual stir, for the Englishman, having much property about him, and having been convinced of the real danger of the road, had applied to the police, and obtained, by dint of liberal pay, an escort of eight dragoons and twelve foot-soldiers, as far as Fondi.

Perhaps, too, there might have been a little ostentation at bottom, though, to say the truth, he had nothing of it in his manner. He moved about, taciturn and reserved as usual, among the gaping crowd; gave laconic orders to John, as he packed away the thousand and one indispensable conveniences of the night; double loaded his pistols with great *sang froid*, and deposited them in the pockets of the carriage; taking no notice of a pair of keen eyes gazing on him from among the herd of loitering idlers.

The fair Venetian now came up with a request, made in her dulcet tones, that he would permit their carriage to proceed under protection of his escort. The Englishman, who was busy loading another pair of pistols for his servant, and held the ramrod between his teeth, nodded assent, as a matter of course, but without lifting up his eyes. The fair Venetian was a little piqued at what she supposed indifference:—"O Dio!" ejaculated she softly as she retired; "Quanto sono insensibili questi Inglesi."

At length, off they set in gallant style. The eight dragoons prancing in front, the twelve foot-soldiers marching in rear, and the carriage moving slowly in the centre, to enable the infantry to keep pace with them. They had proceeded but a few hundred yards, when it was discovered that some indispensable article had been left behind. In fact, the Englishman's purse was missing, and John was dispatched to the inn to search for it. This occasioned a little delay, and the carriage of the Venetians drove slowly on. John came back out of breath and out of humor. The purse was not to be found. His master was irritated; he recollected the very place where it lay; he had not a doubt the Italian servant had pocketed it. John was again sent back. He returned once more without the purse, but with the landlord and the whole household at his heels. A thousand ejaculations and protestations, accompanied by all sorts of grimaces and contortions—

"No purse had been seen—his excellenza must be mistaken."

"No—his excellenza was not mistaken—the purse lay on the marble table, under the mirror, a green purse, half full of gold and silver." Again a thousand grimaces and contortions, and vows by San Gennaro, that no purse of the kind had been seen.

The Englishman became furious. "The waiter had pocketed it—the landlord was a knave—the inn a den of thieves—it was a vile country—he had been cheated and plundered from one end of it to the other—but he'd have satisfaction—he'd drive right off to the police."

He was on the point of ordering the postilions to turn back, when, on rising, he displaced the cushion of the carriage, and the purse of money fell chinking to the floor.

All the blood in his body seemed to rush into his face. —"Curse the purse," said he, as he snatched it up. He dashed a handful of money on the ground before the pale cringing waiter,—"There, be off!" cried he. "John, order the postilions to drive on."

About half an hour had been exhausted in this altercation. The Venetian carriage had loitered along; its passengers looking out from time to time, and expecting the escort every moment to follow. They had gradually turned an angle of the road that shut them out of sight. The little army was again in motion, and made a very picturesque appearance as it wound along at the bottom

of the rocks; the morning sunshine beaming upon the weapons of the soldiery.

The Englishman lolled back in his carriage, vexed with himself at what had passed, and consequently out of humor with all the world. As this, however, is no uncommon case with gentlemen who travel for their pleasure, it is hardly worthy of remark. They had wound up from the coast among the hills, and came to a part of the road that admitted of some prospect ahead.

"I see nothing of the lady's carriage, sir," said John, leaning down from the coach-box.

"Pish!" said the Englishman, testily; "don't plague me about the lady's carriage; must I be continually pestered with the concerns of strangers?" John said not another word, for he understood his master's mood.

The road grew more wild and lonely; they were slowly proceeding on a foot-pace up a hill; the dragoons were some distance ahead, and had just reached the summit of the hill, when they uttered an exclamation, or rather shout, and galloped forward. The Englishman was roused from his sulky reverie. He stretched his head from the carriage, which had attained the brow of the hill. Before him extended a long hollow defile, commanded on one side by rugged precipitous heights, covered with bushes of scanty forest. At some distance he beheld the carriage of the Venetians overturned. A numerous gang of desperadoes were rifling it; the young man and his servant were overpowered, and partly

stripped; and the lady was in the hands of two of the ruffians. The Englishman seized his pistols, sprang from the carriage, and called upon John to follow him.

In the meantime, as the dragoons came forward, the robbers, who were busy with the carriage, quitted their spoil, formed themselves in the middle of the road, and taking a deliberate aim, fired. One of the dragoons fell, another was wounded, and the whole were for a moment checked and thrown into confusion. The robbers loaded again in an instant. The dragoons discharged their carbines, but without apparent effect. They received another volley, which, though none fell, threw them again into confusion. The robbers were loading a second time when they saw the foot-soldiers at hand. "*Scampa via!*" was the word: they abandoned their prey, and retreated up the rocks, the soldiers after them. They fought from cliff to cliff, and bush to bush, the robbers turning every now and then to fire upon their pursuers; the soldiers scrambling after them, and discharging their muskets whenever they could get a chance. Sometimes a soldier or a robber was shot down, and came tumbling among the cliffs. The dragoons kept firing from below, whenever a robber came in sight.

The Englishman had hastened to the scene of action, and the balls discharged at the dragoons had whistled past him as he advanced. One object, however, engrossed his attention. It was the beautiful Venetian lady in the hands of two of the robbers, who, during the confusion of

the fight, carried her shrieking up the mountain. He saw her dress gleaming among the bushes, and he sprang up the rocks to intercept the robbers, as they bore off their prey. The ruggedness of the steep, and the entanglements of the bushes, delayed and impeded him. He lost sight of the lady, but was still guided by her cries, which grew fainter and fainter. They were off to the left, while the reports of muskets showed that the battle was raging to the right. At length he came upon what appeared to be a rugged foot-path, faintly worn in a gulley of the rocks, and beheld the ruffians at some distance hurrying the lady up the defile. One of them hearing his approach, let go his prey, advanced towards him, and levelling the carbine which had been slung on his back, fired. The ball whizzed through the Englishman's hat, and carried with it some of his hair. He returned the fire with one of his pistols, and the robber fell. The other brigand now dropped the lady, and drawing a long pistol from his belt, fired on his adversary with deliberate aim. The ball passed between his left arm and his side, slightly wounding the arm. The Englishman advanced, and discharged his remaining pistol, which wounded the robber, but not severely.

The brigand drew a stiletto and rushed upon his adversary, who eluded the blow, receiving merely a slight wound, and defended himself with his pistol, which had a spring bayonet. They closed with one another, and a desperate struggle ensued. The robber was a square-

built, thickset man, powerful, muscular, and active. The Englishman, though of larger frame and greater strength, was less active, and less accustomed to athletic exercises and feats of hardihood, but he showed himself practised and skilled in the art of defence. They were on a craggy height, and the Englishman perceived that his antagonist was striving to press him to the edge. A side-glance showed him also the robber whom he had first wounded, scrambling up to the assistance of his comrade, stiletto in hand. He had in fact attained the summit of the cliff, he was within a few steps, and the Englishman felt that his case was desperate, when he heard suddenly the report of a pistol, and the ruffian fell. The shot came from John, who had arrived just in time to save his master.

The remaining robber, exhausted by loss of blood and the violence of the contest, showed signs of faltering. The Englishman pursued his advantage, pressed on him, and as his strength relaxed, dashed him headlong from the precipice. He looked after him, and saw him lying motionless among the rocks below.

The Englishman now sought the fair Venetian. He found her senseless on the ground. With his servant's assistance he bore her down to the road, where her husband was raving like one distracted. He had sought her in vain, and had given her over for lost; and when he beheld her thus brought back in safety, his joy was equally wild and ungovernable. He would have caught her insensible form to his bosom had not the Englishman

restrained him. The latter, now really aroused, displayed a true tenderness and manly gallantry, which one would not have expected from his habitual phlegm. His kindness, however, was practical, not wasted in words. He dispatched John to the carriage for restoratives of all kinds, and, totally thoughtless of himself, was anxious only about his lovely charge. The occasional discharge of firearms along the height, showed that a retreating fight was still kept up by the robbers. The lady gave signs of reviving animation. The Englishman, eager to get her from this place of danger, conveyed her to his own carriage, and, committing her to the care of her husband, ordered the dragoons to escort them to Fondi. The Venetian would have insisted on the Englishman's getting into the carriage; but the latter refused. He poured forth a torrent of thanks and benedictions; but the Englishman beckoned to the postilions to drive on.

John now dressed his master's wounds, which were found not to be serious, though he was faint with loss of blood. The Venetian carriage had been righted, and the baggage replaced; and, getting into it, they set out on their way towards Fondi, leaving the foot-soldiers still engaged in ferreting out the banditti.

Before arriving at Fondi, the fair Venetian had completely recovered from her swoon. She made the usual question,—

"Where was she?"

"In the Englishman's carriage."

"How had she escaped from the robbers?"

"The Englishman had rescued her."

Her transports were unbounded; and mingled with them were enthusiastic ejaculations of gratitude to her deliverer. A thousand times did she reproach herself for having accused him of coldness and insensibility. The moment she saw him, she rushed into his arms with the vivacity of her nation, and hung about his neck in a speechless transport of gratitude. Never was man more embarrassed by the embraces of a fine woman.

"Tut!—tut!" said the Englishman.

"You are wounded!" shrieked the fair Venetian as she saw blood upon his clothes.

"Pooh! nothing at all!"

"My deliverer!—my angel!" exclaimed she, clasping him again round the neck, and sobbing on his bosom.

"Pish!" said the Englishman, with a good-humored tone, but looking somewhat foolish, "this is all humbug."

The fair Venetian, however, has never since accused the English of insensibility.

PART FOURTH.

THE MONEY-DIGGERS.

FOUND AMONG THE PAPERS OF THE LATE DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER.

"Now I remember those old women's words,
Who in my youth would tell me winter's tales:
And speak of sprites and ghosts that glide by night
About the place where treasure hath been hid."

MARLOW'S *Jew of Malta.*

HELL-GATE.

BOUT six miles from the renowned city of the Manhattoes, in that Sound or arm of the sea which passes between the mainland and Nassau, or Long Island, there is a narrow strait, where the current is violently compressed between shouldering promontories, and horribly perplexed by rocks and shoals. Being, at the best of times, a very violent, impetuous current, it takes these impediments in mighty dudgeon; boiling in whirlpools; brawling and fretting in ripples; raging and roaring in rapids and breakers; and, in short, indulging in all kinds of wrong-headed paroxysms. At such times, woe to any unlucky vessel that ventures within its clutches.

This termagant humor, however, prevails only at certain times of tide. At low water, for instance, it is as pacific a stream as you would wish to see; but as the tide rises, it begins to fret; at half-tide it roars with might and main, like a bull bellowing for more drink; but when the tide is full, it relapses into quiet, and, for a time, sleeps as soundly as an alderman after dinner. In fact, it may be compared to a quarrelsome toper, who is

a peaceable fellow enough when he has no liquor at all, or when he has a skinfull; but who, when half-seas-over, plays the very devil.

This mighty, blustering, bullying, hard-drinking little strait was a place of great danger and perplexity to the Dutch navigators of ancient days; hectoring their tub-built barks in a most unruly style; whirling them about in a manner to make any but a Dutchman giddy, and not unfrequently stranding them upon rocks and reefs, as it did the famous squadron of Oloffe the Dreamer, when seeking a place to found the city of the Manhattoes. Whereupon, out of sheer spleen, they denominated it *Helle-Gat*, and solemnly gave it over to the devil. This appellation has since been aptly rendered into English by the name of Hell-gate, and into nonsense by the name of *Hurl*-gate, according to certain foreign intruders, who neither understood Dutch nor English,—may St. Nicholas confound them!

This strait of Hell-gate was a place of great awe and perilous enterprise to me in my boyhood, having been much of a navigator on those small seas, and having more than once run the risk of shipwreck and drowning in the course of certain holiday voyages, to which, in common with other Dutch urchins, I was rather prone. Indeed, partly from the name, and partly from various strange circumstances connected with it, this place had far more terrors in the eyes of my truant companions and myself than had Scylla and Charybdis for the navigators of yore.

In the midst of this strait, and hard by a group of rocks called the Hen and Chickens, there lay the wreck of a vessel which had been entangled in the whirlpools and stranded during a storm. There was a wild story told to us of this being the wreck of a pirate, and some tale of bloody murder which I cannot now recollect, but which made us regard it with great awe, and keep far from it in our cruisings. Indeed, the desolate look of the forlorn hulk, and the fearful place where it lay rotting, were enough to awaken strange notions. A row of timber-heads, blackened by time, just peered above the surface at high water; but at low tide a considerable part of the hull was bare, and its great ribs or timbers, partly stripped of their planks, and dripping with sea-weeds, looked like the huge skeleton of some sea-monster. There was also the stump of a mast, with a few ropes and blocks swinging about and whistling in the wind, while the sea-gull wheeled and screamed around the melancholy carcass. I have a faint recollection of some hobgoblin tale of sailors' ghosts being seen about this wreck at night, with bare skulls, and blue lights in their sockets instead of eyes, but I have forgotten all the particulars.

In fact, the whole of this neighborhood was like the straits of Pelorus of yore, a region of fable and romance to me. From the strait to the Manhattoes, the borders of the Sound are greatly diversified, being broken and indented by rocky nooks overhung with

trees, which give them a wild and romantic look. In the time of my boyhood, they abounded with traditions about pirates, ghosts, smugglers, and buried money, which had a wonderful effect upon the young minds of my companions and myself.

As I grew to more mature years, I made diligent research after the truth of these strange traditions; for I have always been a curious investigator of the valuable but obscure branches of the history of my native province. I found infinite difficulty, however, in arriving at any precise information. In seeking to dig up one fact, it is incredible the number of fables that I unearthed. I will say nothing of the devil's stepping-stones, by which the arch-fiend made his retreat from Connecticut to Long Island, across the Sound; seeing the subject is likely to be learnedly treated by a worthy friend and contemporary historian whom I have furnished with particulars thereof.* Neither will I say anything of the black man in the three-cornered hat, seated in the stern of a jolly-boat, who used to be seen about Hell-gate in stormy weather, and who went by the name of the pirate's *spuke*, (i. e. pirate's ghost,) and whom, it is said, old Governor Stuyvesant once shot with a silver bullet; because I never could meet with any person of stanch cred-

* For a very interesting and authentic account of the devil and his stepping-stones, see the valuable Memoir read before the New York Historical Society, since the death of Mr. Knickerbocker, by his friend, an eminent jurist of the place.

ibility who professed to have seen this spectrum, unless it were the widow of Manus Conklen, the blacksmith, of Frogsneck; but then, poor woman, she was a little purblind, and might have been mistaken; though they say she saw farther than other folks in the dark.

All this, however, was but little satisfactory in regard to the tales of pirates and their buried money, about which I was most curious; and the following is all that I could, for a long time, collect, that had anything like an air of authenticity.

KIDD THE PIRATE.

IN old times, just after the territory of the New Netherlands had been wrested from the hands of their High Mightinesses, the Lords States-General of Holland, by King Charles the Second, and while it was as yet in an unquiet state, the province was a great resort of random adventurers, loose livers, and all that class of hap-hazard fellows who live by their wits, and dislike the old-fashioned restraint of law and gospel. Among these, the foremost were the buccaneers. These were rovers of the deep, who perhaps in time of war had been educated in those schools of piracy, the privateers; but having once tasted the sweets of plunder, had ever retained a hankering after it. There is but a slight step from the privateersman to the pirate; both fight for the love of plunder; only that the latter is the bravest, as he dares both the enemy and the gallows.

But in whatever school they had been taught, the buccaneers that kept about the English colonies were daring fellows, and made sad work in times of peace among the Spanish settlements and Spanish merchantmen.

The easy access to the harbor of the Manhattoes, the number of hiding-places about its waters, and the laxity of its scarcely organized government, made it a great rendezvous of the pirates; where they might dispose of their booty, and concert new depredations. As they brought home with them wealthy lading of all kinds, the luxuries of the tropics, and the sumptuous spoils of the Spanish provinces, and disposed of them with the proverbial carelessness of freebooters, they were welcome visitors to the thrifty traders of the Manhattoes. Crews of these desperadoes, therefore, the runagates of every country and every clime, might be seen swaggering in open day about the streets of the little burgh, elbowing its quiet mynheers; trafficking away their rich outlandish plunder at half or quarter price to the wary merchant; and then squandering their prize-money in taverns, drinking, gambling, singing, swearing, shouting, and astounding the neighborhood with midnight brawl and ruffian revelry.

At length these excesses rose to such a height as to become a scandal to the provinces, and to call loudly for the interposition of government. Measures were accordingly taken to put a stop to the widely extended evil, and to ferret this vermin brood out of the colonies.

Among the agents employed to execute this purpose was the notorious Captain Kidd. He had long been an equivocal character; one of those nondescript animals of the ocean that are neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. He

was somewhat of a trader, something more of a smuggler, with a considerable dash of the picaroon. He had traded for many years among the pirates, in a little rakish mosquito-built vessel, that could run into all kinds of waters. He knew all their haunts and lurking-places; was always hooking about on mysterious voyages, and was as busy as a Mother Cary's chicken in a storm.

This nondescript personage was pitched upon by government as the very man to hunt the pirates by sea, upon the good old maxim of "setting a rogue to catch a rogue"; or as otters are sometimes used to catch their cousins-german, the fish.

Kidd accordingly sailed for New York, in 1695, in a gallant vessel called the Adventure Galley, well armed and duly commissioned. On arriving at his old haunts, however, he shipped his crew on new terms; enlisted a number of his old comrades, lads of the knife and the pistol; and then set sail for the East. Instead of cruising against pirates, he turned pirate himself; steered to the Madeiras, to Bonavista, and Madagascar, and cruised about the entrance of the Red Sea. Here, among other maritime robberies, he captured a rich Quedah merchantman, manned by Moors, though commanded by an Englishman. Kidd would fain have passed this off for a worthy exploit, as being a kind of crusade against the infidels; but government had long since lost all relish for such Christian triumphs.

After roaming the seas, trafficking his prizes, and changing from ship to ship, Kidd had the hardihood to return to Boston, laden with booty, with a crew of swaggering companions at his heels.

Times, however, were changed. The buccaneers could no longer show a whisker in the colonies with impunity. The new Governor, Lord Bellamont, had signalized himself by his zeal in extirpating these offenders; and was doubly exasperated against Kidd, having been instrumental in appointing him to the trust which he had betrayed. No sooner, therefore, did he show himself in Boston, than the alarm was given of his reappearance, and measures were taken to arrest this cutpurse of the ocean. The daring character which Kidd had acquired, however, and the desperate fellows who followed like bull-dogs at his heels, caused a little delay in his arrest. He took advantage of this, it is said, to bury the greater part of his treasures, and then carried a high head about the streets of Boston. He even attempted to defend himself when arrested, but was secured and thrown into prison, with his followers. Such was the formidable character of this pirate and his crew, that it was thought advisable to dispatch a frigate to bring them to England. Great exertions were made to screen him from justice, but in vain; he and his comrades were tried, condemned, and hanged at Execution Dock in London. Kidd died hard, for the rope with which he was first tied up broke with his weight, and he tumbled to the ground.

He was tied up a second time, and more effectually; hence came, doubtless, the story of Kidd's having a charmed life, and that he had to be twice hanged.

Such is the main outline of Kidd's history; but it has given birth to an innumerable progeny of traditions. The report of his having buried great treasures of gold and jewels before his arrest, set the brains of all the good people along the coast in a ferment. There were rumors on rumors of great sums of money found here and there, sometimes in one part of the country, sometimes in another; of coins with Moorish inscriptions, doubtless the spoils of his eastern prizes, but which the common people looked upon with superstitious awe, regarding the Moorish letters as diabolical or magical characters.

Some reported the treasure to have been buried in solitary, unsettled places, about Plymouth and Cape Cod; but by degrees various other parts, not only on the eastern coast, but along the shores of the Sound, and even of Manhattan and Long Island, were gilded by these rumors. In fact, the rigorous measures of Lord Bellamont spread sudden consternation among the buccaneers in every part of the provinces: they secreted their money and jewels in lonely out-of-the-way places, about the wild shores of the rivers and sea-coast, and dispersed themselves over the face of thecountry. The hand of justice prevented many of them from ever returning to regain their buried treasures, which remained, and

remain probably to this day, objects of enterprise for the money-digger.

This is the cause of those frequent reports of trees and rocks bearing mysterious marks, supposed to indicate the spots where treasures lay hidden; and many have been the ransackings after the pirate's booty. In all the stories which once abounded of these enterprises the devil played a conspicuous part. Either he was conciliated by ceremonies and invocations, or some solemn compact was made with him. Still he was ever prone to play the money-diggers some slippery trick. Some would dig so far as to come to an iron chest, when some baffling circumstance was sure to take place. Either the earth would fall in and fill up the pit, or some direful noise or apparition would frighten the party from the place: sometimes the devil himself would appear, and bear off the prize when within their very grasp; and if they revisited the place the next day, not a trace would be found of their labors of the preceding night.

All these rumors, however, were extremely vague, and for a long time tantalized, without gratifying, my curiosity. There is nothing in this world so hard to get at as truth, and there is nothing in this world but truth that I care for. I sought among all my favorite sources of authentic information, the oldest inhabitants, and particularly the old Dutch wives of the province; but though I flatter myself that I am better versed than most men in

the curious history of my native province, yet for a long time my inquiries were unattended with any substantial result.

At length it happened that, one calm day in the latter part of summer, I was relaxing myself from the toils of severe study, by a day's amusement in fishing in those waters which had been the favorite resort of my boyhood. I was in company with several worthy burghers of my native city, among whom were more than one illustrious member of the corporation, whose names, did I dare to mention them, would do honor to my humble page. Our sport was indifferent. The fish did not bite freely, and we frequently changed our fishing-ground without bettering our luck. We were at length anchored close under a ledge of rocky coast, on the eastern side of the island of Manhatta. It was a still, warm day. The stream whirled and dimpled by us, without a wave or even a ripple; and everything was so calm and quiet, that it was almost startling when the kingfisher would pitch himself from the branch of some high tree, and after suspending himself for a moment in the air, to take his aim, would souse into the smooth water after his prey. While we were lolling in our boat, half drowsy with the warm stillness of the day, and the dulness of our sport, one of our party, a worthy alderman, was overtaken by a slumber, and, as he dozed, suffered the sinker of his drop-line to lie upon the bottom of the river. On waking, he found he had caught something of importance

from the weight. On drawing it to the surface, we were much surprised to find it a long pistol of very curious and outlandish fashion, which, from its rusted condition, and its stock being worm-eaten and covered with barnacles, appeared to have lain a long time under water. The unexpected appearance of this document of warfare occasioned much speculation among my pacific companions. One supposed it to have fallen there during the revolutionary war; another, from the peculiarity of its fashion, attributed it to the voyagers in the earliest days of the settlement; perchance to the renowned Adriaen Block, who explored the Sound, and discovered Block Island, since so noted for its cheese. But a third, after regarding it for some time, pronounced it to be of veritable Spanish workmanship.

"I'll warrant," said he, "if this pistol could talk, it would tell strange stories of hard fights among the Spanish Dons. I've no doubt but it is a relic of the buccaneers of old times,—who knows but it belonged to Kidd himself?"

"Ah! that Kidd was a resolute fellow," cried an old iron-faced Cape-Cod whaler.—"There's a fine old song about him, all to the tune of—

> My name is Captain Kidd,
> As I sailed, as I sailed;—

and then it tells about how he gained the devil's good graces by burying the Bible:—

I'd a Bible in my hand,
As I sailed, as I sailed,
And I sunk it in the sand,
As I sailed.—

"Odsfish, if I thought this pistol had belonged to Kidd, I should set great store by it, for curiosity's sake. By the way, I recollect a story about a fellow who once dug up Kidd's buried money, which was written by a neighbor of mine, and which I learnt by heart. As the fish don't bite just now, I'll tell it to you, by way of passing away the time."—And so saying, he gave us the following narration.

THE DEVIL AND TOM WALKER.

A FEW miles from Boston in Massachusetts, there is a deep inlet, winding several miles into the interior of the country from Charles Bay, and terminating in a thickly-wooded swamp or morass. On one side of this inlet is a beautiful dark grove; on the opposite side the land rises abruptly from the water's edge into a high ridge, on which grow a few scattered oaks of great age and immense size. Under one of these gigantic trees, according to old stories, there was a great amount of treasure buried by Kidd the pirate. The inlet allowed a facility to bring the money in a boat secretly and at night to the very foot of the hill; the elevation of the place permitted a good look-out to be kept that no one was at hand; while the remarkable trees formed good landmarks by which the place might easily be found again. The old stories add, moreover, that the devil presided at the hiding of the money, and took it under his guardianship; but this, it is well known, he always does with buried treasure, particularly when it has been ill-gotten. Be that as it may, Kidd never returned to recover his wealth; being shortly

after seized at Boston, sent out to England, and there hanged for a pirate.

About the year 1727, just at the time that earthquakes were prevalent in New England, and shook many tall sinners down upon their knees, there lived near this place a meagre, miserly fellow, of the name of Tom Walker. He had a wife as miserly as himself: they were so miserly that they even conspired to cheat each other. Whatever the woman could lay hands on, she hid away; a hen could not cackle but she was on the alert to secure the new-laid egg. Her husband was continually prying about to detect her secret hoards, and many and fierce were the conflicts that took place about what ought to have been common property. They lived in a forlorn-looking house that stood alone, and had an air of starvation. A few straggling savin-trees, emblems of sterility, grew near it; no smoke ever curled from its chimney; no traveller stopped at its door. A miserable horse, whose ribs were as articulate as the bars of a gridiron, stalked about a field, where a thin carpet of moss, scarcely covering the ragged beds of puddingstone, tantalized and balked his hunger; and sometimes he would lean his head over the fence, look piteously at the passer-by, and seem to petition deliverance from this land of famine.

The house and its inmates had altogether a bad name. Tom's wife was a tall termagant, fierce of temper, loud of tongue, and strong of arm. Her voice was often heard

in wordy warfare with her husband; and his face sometimes showed signs that their conflicts were not confined to words. No one ventured, however, to interfere between them. The lonely wayfarer shrunk within himself at the horrid clamor and clapper-clawing; eyed the den of discord askance; and hurried on his way, rejoicing, if a bachelor, in his celibacy.

One day that Tom Walker had been to a distant part of the neighborhood, he took what he considered a short cut homeward, through the swamp. Like most short cuts, it was an ill-chosen route. The swamp was thickly grown with great gloomy pines and hemlocks, some of them ninety feet high, which made it dark at noonday, and a retreat for all the owls of the neighborhood. It was full of pits and quagmires, partly covered with weeds and mosses, where the green surface often betrayed the traveller into a gulf of black, smothering mud: there were also dark and stagnant pools, the abodes of the tadpole, the bull-frog, and the water-snake; where the trunks of pines and hemlocks lay half-drowned, half-rotting, looking like alligators sleeping in the mire.

Tom had long been picking his way cautiously through this treacherous forest; stepping from tuft to tuft of rushes and roots, which afforded precarious footholds among deep sloughs; or pacing carefully, like a cat, along the prostrate trunks of trees; startled now and then by the sudden screaming of the bittern, or the

quacking of a wild duck rising on the wing from some solitary pool. At length he arrived at a firm piece of ground, which ran out like a peninsula into the deep bosom of the swamp. It had been one of the strongholds of the Indians during their wars with the first colonists. Here they had thrown up a kind of fort, which they had looked upon as almost impregnable, and had used as a place of refuge for their squaws and children. Nothing remained of the old Indian fort but a few embankments, gradually sinking to the level of the surrounding earth, and already overgrown in part by oaks and other forest trees, the foliage of which formed a contrast to the dark pines and hemlocks of the swamp.

It was late in the dusk of evening when Tom Walker reached the old fort, and he paused there awhile to rest himself. Any one but he would have felt unwilling to linger in this lonely, melancholy place, for the common people had a bad opinion of it, from the stories handed down from the time of the Indian wars; when it was asserted that the savages held incantations here, and made sacrifices to the evil spirit.

Tom Walker, however, was not a man to be troubled with any fears of the kind. He reposed himself for some time on the trunk of a fallen hemlock, listening to the boding cry of the tree-toad, and delving with his walking-staff into a mound of black mould at his feet. As he turned up the soil unconsciously, his staff struck against something hard. He raked it out of the vegetable

mould, and lo! a cloven skull, with an Indian tomahawk buried deep in it, lay before him. The rust on the weapon showed the time that had elapsed since this death-blow had been given. It was a dreary memento of the fierce struggle that had taken place in this last foothold of the Indian warriors.

"Humph!" said Tom Walker, as he gave it a kick to shake the dirt from it.

"Let that skull alone!" said a gruff voice. Tom lifted up his eyes, and beheld a great black man seated directly opposite him, on the stump of a tree. He was exceedingly surprised, having neither heard nor seen any one approach; and he was still more perplexed on observing, as well as the gathering gloom would permit, that the stranger was neither negro nor Indian. It is true he was dressed in a rude half Indian garb, and had a red belt or sash swathed round his body; but his face was neither black nor copper-color, but swarthy and dingy, and begrimed with soot, as if he had been accustomed to toil among fires and forges. He had a shock of coarse black hair, that stood out from his head in all directions, and bore an axe on his shoulder.

He scowled for a moment at Tom with a pair of great red eyes.

"What are you doing on my grounds?" said the black man, with a hoarse growling voice.

"Your grounds!" said Tom, with a sneer, "no more your grounds than mine; they belong to Deacon Peabody."

"Deacon Peabody be d——d," said the stranger, "as I flatter myself he will be, if he does not look more to his own sins and less to those of his neighbors. Look yonder, and see how Deacon Peabody is faring."

Tom looked in the direction that the stranger pointed, and beheld one of the great trees, fair and flourishing without, but rotten at the core, and saw that it had been nearly hewn through, so that the first high wind was likely to blow it down. On the bark of the tree was scored the name of Deacon Peabody, an eminent man, who had waxed wealthy by driving shrewd bargains with the Indians. He now looked around, and found most of the tall trees marked with the name of some great man of the colony, and all more or less scored by the axe. The one on which he had been seated, and which had evidently just been hewn down, bore the name of Crowninshield; and he recollected a mighty rich man of that name, who made a vulgar display of wealth, which it was whispered he had acquired by buccaneering.

"He's just ready for burning!" said the black man, with a growl of triumph. "You see I am likely to have a good stock of firewood for winter."

"But what right have you," said Tom, "to cut down Deacon Peabody's timber?"

"The right of a prior claim," said the other. "This woodland belonged to me long before one of your white-faced race put foot upon the soil."

"And pray, who are you, if I may be so bold?" said Tom.

"Oh, I go by various names. I am the wild huntsman in some countries; the black miner in others. In this neighborhood I am known by the name of the black woodsman. I am he to whom the red men consecrated this spot, and in honor of whom they now and then roasted a white man, by way of sweet-smelling sacrifice. Since the red men have been exterminated by you white savages, I amuse myself by presiding at the persecutions of Quakers and Anabaptists; I am the great patron and prompter of slave-dealers, and the grand-master of the Salem witches."

"The upshot of all which is, that, if I mistake not," said Tom, sturdily, "you are he commonly called Old Scratch."

"The same, at your service!" replied the black man, with a half civil nod.

Such was the opening of this interview, according to the old story; though it has almost too familiar an air to be credited. One would think that to meet with such a singular personage, in this wild, lonely place, would have shaken any man's nerves; but Tom was a hard-minded fellow, not easily daunted, and he had lived so long with a termagant wife, that he did not even fear the devil.

It is said that after this commencement they had a long and earnest conversation together, as Tom returned homeward. The black man told him of great sums of

money buried by Kidd the pirate, under the oak-trees on the high ridge, not far from the morass. All these were under his command, and protected by his power, so that none could find them but such as propitiated his favor. These he offered to place within Tom Walker's reach, having conceived an especial kindness for him; but they were to be had only on certain conditions. What these conditions were may be easily surmised, though Tom never disclosed them publicly. They must have been very hard, for he required time to think of them, and he was not a man to stick at trifles when money was in view. When they had reached the edge of the swamp, the stranger paused. "What proof have I that all you have been telling me is true?" said Tom. "There's my signature," said the black man, pressing his finger on Tom's forehead. So saying, he turned off among the thickets of the swamp, and seemed, as Tom said, to go down, down, down, into the earth, until nothing but his head and shoulders could be seen, and so on, until he totally disappeared.

When Tom reached home, he found the black print of a finger burnt, as it were, into his forehead, which nothing could obliterate.

The first news his wife had to tell him was the sudden death of Absalom Crowninshield, the rich buccaneer. It was announced in the papers with the usual flourish, that "A great man had fallen in Israel."

Tom recollected the tree which his black friend had

just hewn down, and which was ready for burning. "Let the freebooter roast," said Tom, "who cares!" He now felt convinced that all he had heard and seen was no illusion.

He was not prone to let his wife into his confidence; but as this was an uneasy secret, he willingly shared it with her. All her avarice was awakened at the mention of hidden gold, and she urged her husband to comply with the black man's terms, and secure what would make them wealthy for life. However Tom might have felt disposed to sell himself to the Devil, he was determined not to do so to oblige his wife; so he flatly refused, out of the mere spirit of contradiction. Many and bitter were the quarrels they had on the subject; but the more she talked, the more resolute was Tom not to be damned to please her.

At length she determined to drive the bargain on her own account, and if she succeeded, to keep all the gain to herself. Being of the same fearless temper as her husband, she set off for the old Indian fort towards the close of a summer's day. She was many hours absent. When she came back, she was reserved and sullen in her replies. She spoke something of a black man, whom she had met about twilight hewing at the root of a tall tree. He was sulky, however, and would not come to terms: she was to go again with a propitiatory offering, but what it was she forbore to say.

The next evening she set off again for the swamp, with

her apron heavily laden. Tom waited and waited for her, but in vain; midnight came, but she did not make her appearance: morning, noon, night returned, but still she did not come. Tom now grew uneasy for her safety, especially as he found she had carried off in her apron the silver tea-pot and spoons, and every portable article of value. Another night elapsed, another morning came; but no wife. In a word, she was never heard of more.

What was her real fate nobody knows, in consequence of so many pretending to know. It is one of those facts which have become confounded by a variety of historians. Some asserted that she lost her way among the tangled mazes of the swamp, and sank into some pit or slough; others, more uncharitable, hinted that she had eloped with the household booty, and made off to some other province; while others surmised that the tempter had decoyed her into a dismal quagmire, on the top of which her hat was found lying. In confirmation of this, it was said a great black man, with an axe on his shoulder, was seen late that very evening coming out of the swamp, carrying a bundle tied in a check apron, with an air of surly triumph.

The most current and probable story, however, observes, that Tom Walker grew so anxious about the fate of his wife and his property, that he set out at length to seek them both at the Indian fort. During a long summer's afternoon he searched about the gloomy place, but no wife was to be seen. He called her name repeat-

edly, but she was nowhere to be heard. The bittern alone responded to his voice, as he flew screaming by; or the bull-frog croaked dolefully from a neighboring pool. At length, it is said, just in the brown hour of twilight, when the owls began to hoot, and the bats to flit about, his attention was attracted by the clamor of carrion crows hovering about a cypress-tree. He looked up, and beheld a bundle tied in a check apron, and hanging in the branches of the tree, with a great vulture perched hard by, as if keeping watch upon it. He leaped with joy; for he recognized his wife's apron, and supposed it to contain the household valuables.

"Let us get hold of the property," said he, consolingly to himself, "and we will endeavor to do without the woman."

As he scrambled up the tree, the vulture spread its wide wings, and sailed off, screaming, into the deep shadows of the forest. Tom seized the checked apron, but, woful sight! found nothing but a heart and liver tied up in it!

Such, according to this most authentic old story, was all that was to be found of Tom's wife. She had probably attempted to deal with the black man as she had been accustomed to deal with her husband; but though a female scold is generally considered a match for the devil, yet in this instance she appears to have had the worst of it. She must have died game, however; for it is said Tom noticed many prints of cloven feet deeply

stamped about the tree, and found handfuls of hair, that looked as if they had been plucked from the coarse black shock of the woodman. Tom knew his wife's prowess by experience. He shrugged his shoulders, as he looked at the signs of a fierce clapper-clawing. "Egad," said he to himself, "Old Scratch must have had a tough time of it!"

Tom consoled himself for the loss of his property, with the loss of his wife, for he was a man of fortitude. He even felt something like gratitude towards the black woodman, who, he considered, had done him a kindness. He sought, therefore, to cultivate a further acquaintance with him, but for some time without success; the old black-legs played shy, for whatever people may think, he is not always to be had for calling for: he knows how to play his cards when pretty sure of his game.

At length, it is said, when delay had whetted Tom's eagerness to the quick, and prepared him to agree to anything rather than not gain the promised treasure, he met the black man one evening in his usual woodman's dress, with his axe on his shoulder, sauntering along the swamp, and humming a tune. He affected to receive Tom's advances with great indifference, made brief replies, and went on humming his tune.

By degrees, however, Tom brought him to business, and they began to haggle about the terms on which the former was to have the pirate's treasure. There was one condition which need not be mentioned, being generally

understood in all cases where the devil grants favors; but there were others about which, though of less importance, he was inflexibly obstinate. He insisted that the money found through his means should be employed in his service. He proposed, therefore, that Tom should employ it in the black traffic; that is to say, that he should fit out a slave-ship. This, however, Tom resolutely refused: he was bad enough in all conscience; but the devil himself could not tempt him to turn slave-trader.

Finding Tom so squeamish on this point, he did not insist upon it, but proposed, instead, that he should turn usurer; the devil being extremely anxious for the increase of usurers, looking upon them as his peculiar people.

To this no objections were made, for it was just to Tom's taste.

"You shall open a broker's shop in Boston next month," said the black man.

"I'll do it to-morrow, if you wish," said Tom Walker.

"You shall lend money at two per cent. a month."

"Egad, I'll charge four!" replied Tom Walker.

"You shall extort bonds, foreclose mortgages, drive the merchants to bankruptcy"——

"I'll drive them to the d——l," cried Tom Walker.

"You are the usurer for my money!" said black-legs with delight. "When will you want the rhino?"

"This very night."

"Done!" said the devil.

"Done!" said Tom Walker.—So they shook hands and struck a bargain.

A few days' time saw Tom Walker seated behind his desk in a counting-house in Boston.

His reputation for a ready-moneyed man, who would lend money out for a good consideration, soon spread abroad. Everybody remembers the time of Governor Belcher, when money was particularly scarce. It was a time of paper credit. The country had been deluged with government bills, the famous Land Bank had been established; there had been a rage for speculating; the people had run mad with schemes for new settlements; for building cities in the wilderness; land-jobbers went about with maps of grants, and townships, and Eldorados, lying nobody knew where, but which everybody was ready to purchase. In a word, the great speculating fever which breaks out every now and then in the country, had raged to an alarming degree, and everybody was dreaming of making sudden fortunes from nothing. As usual the fever had subsided; the dream had gone off, and the imaginary fortunes with it; the patients were left in doleful plight, and the whole country resounded with the consequent cry of "hard times."

At this propitious time of public distress did Tom Walker set up as usurer in Boston. His door was soon thronged by customers. The needy and adventurous; the gambling speculator; the dreaming land-jobber;

the thriftless tradesman; the merchant with cracked credit; in short, every one driven to raise money by desperate means and desperate sacrifices, hurried to Tom Walker.

Thus Tom was the universal friend of the needy, and acted like a "friend in need"; that is to say, he always exacted good pay and good security. In proportion to the distress of the applicant was the hardness of his terms. He accumulated bonds and mortgages; gradually squeezed his customers closer and closer: and sent them at length, dry as a sponge, from his door.

In this way he made money hand over hand; became a rich and mighty man, and exalted his cocked hat upon 'Change. He built himself, as usual, a vast house, out of ostentation; but left the greater part of it unfinished and unfurnished, out of parsimony. He even set up a carriage in the fulness of his vainglory, though he nearly starved the horses which drew it; and as the ungreased wheels groaned and screeched on the axle-trees, you would have thought you heard the souls of the poor debtors he was squeezing.

As Tom waxed old, however, he grew thoughtful. Having secured the good things of this world, he began to feel anxious about those of the next. He thought with regret on the bargain he had made with his black friend, and set his wits to work to cheat him out of the conditions. He became, therefore, all of a sudden, a violent church-goer. He prayed loudly and strenuously, as if

heaven were to be taken by force of lungs. Indeed, one might always tell when he had sinned most during the week, by the clamor of his Sunday devotion. The quiet Christians who had been modestly and steadfastly travelling Zionward, were struck with self-reproach at seeing themselves so suddenly outstripped in their career by this new-made convert. Tom was as rigid in religious as in money matters; he was a stern supervisor and censurer of his neighbors, and seemed to think every sin entered up to their account became a credit on his own side of the page. He even talked of the expediency of reviving the persecution of Quakers and Anabaptists. In a word, Tom's zeal became as notorious as his riches.

Still, in spite of all this strenuous attention to forms, Tom had a lurking dread that the devil, after all, would have his due. That he might not be taken unawares, therefore, it is said he always carried a small Bible in his coat-pocket. He had also a great folio Bible on his counting-house desk, and would frequently be found reading it when people called on business; on such occasions he would lay his green spectacles in the book, to mark the place, while he turned round to drive some usurious bargain.

Some say that Tom grew a little crack-brained in his old days, and that, fancying his end approaching, he had his horse new shod, saddled and bridled, and buried with his feet uppermost; because he supposed that at the last day the world would be turned upside down; in which

case he should find his horse standing ready for mounting, and he was determined at the worst to give his old friend a run for it. This, however, is probably a mere old wives' fable. If he really did take such a precaution, it was totally superfluous; at least so says the authentic old legend; which closes his story in the following manner.

One hot summer afternoon in the dog-days, just as a terrible black thunder-gust was coming up, Tom sat in his counting-house, in his white linen cap and India silk morning-gown. He was on the point of foreclosing a mortgage, by which he would complete the ruin of an unlucky land-speculator for whom he had professed the greatest friendship. The poor land-jobber begged him to grant a few months' indulgence. Tom had grown testy and irritated, and refused another day.

"My family will be ruined, and brought upon the parish," said the land-jobber. "Charity begins at home," replied Tom; "I must take care of myself in these hard times."

"You have made so much money out of me," said the speculator.

Tom lost his patience and his piety. "The devil take me," said he, "if I have made a farthing!"

Just then there were three loud knocks at the street-door. He stepped out to see who was there. A black man was holding a black horse, which neighed and stamped with impatience.

"Tom, you're come for," said the black fellow, gruffly. Tom shrank back, but too late. He had left his little Bible at the bottom of his coat-pocket, and his big Bible on the desk buried under the mortgage he was about to foreclose: never was sinner taken more unawares. The black man whisked him like a child into the saddle, gave the horse the lash, and away he galloped, with Tom on his back, in the midst of the thunder-storm. The clerks stuck their pens behind their ears, and stared after him from the windows. Away went Tom Walker, dashing down the streets; his white cap bobbing up and down; his morning-gown fluttering in the wind, and his steed striking fire out of the pavement at every bound. When the clerks turned to look for the black man, he had disappeared.

Tom Walker never returned to foreclose the mortgage. A countryman, who lived on the border of the swamp, reported that in the height of the thunder-gust he had heard a great clattering of hoofs and a howling along the road, and running to the window caught sight of a figure, such as I have described, on a horse that galloped like mad across the fields, over the hills, and down into the black hemlock swamp towards the old Indian fort; and that shortly after a thunder-bolt falling in that direction seemed to set the whole forest in a blaze.

The good people of Boston shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders, but had been so much accustomed to witches and goblins, and tricks of the devil, in

all kinds of shapes, from the first settlement of the colony, that they were not so much horror-struck as might have been expected. Trustees were appointed to take charge of Tom's effects. There was nothing, however, to administer upon. On searching his coffers, all his bonds and mortgages were found reduced to cinders. In place of gold and silver, his iron chest was filled with chips and shavings; two skeletons lay in his stable instead of his half-starved horses, and the very next day his great house took fire and was burnt to the ground.

Such was the end of Tom Walker and his ill-gotten wealth. Let all griping money-brokers lay this story to heart. The truth of it is not to be doubted. The very hole under the oak-trees, whence he dug Kidd's money, is to be seen to this day; and the neighboring swamp and old Indian fort are often haunted in stormy nights by a figure on horseback, in morning-gown and white cap, which is doubtless the troubled spirit of the usurer. In fact, the story has resolved itself into a proverb, and is the origin of that popular saying, so prevalent throughout New England, of "The Devil and Tom Walker."

Such, as nearly as I can recollect, was the purport of the tale told by the Cape-Cod whaler. There were divers trivial particulars which I have omitted, and which whiled away the morning very pleasantly, until the time of tide favorable to fishing being passed, it was proposed

to land, and refresh ourselves under the trees, till the noontide heat should have abated.

We accordingly landed on a delectable part of the island of Manhatta, in that shady and embowered tract formerly under the domain of the ancient family of the Hardenbrooks. It was a spot well known to me in the course of the aquatic expeditions of my boyhood. Not far from where we landed there was an old Dutch family vault, constructed in the side of a bank, which had been an object of great awe and fable among my schoolboy associates. We had peeped into it during one of our coasting voyages, and been startled by the sight of mouldering coffins and musty bones within; but what had given it the most fearful interest in our eyes, was its being in some way connected with the pirate wreck which lay rotting among the rocks of Hell-gate. There were stories also of smuggling connected with it, particularly relating to a time when this retired spot was owned by a noted burgher, called Ready Money Provost; a man of whom it was whispered that he had many mysterious dealings with parts beyond the seas. All these things, however, had been jumbled together in our minds in that vague way in which such themes are mingled up in the tales of boyhood.

While I was pondering upon these matters, my companions had spread a repast, from the contents of our well-stored pannier, under a broad chestnut, on the greensward which swept down to the water's edge. Here we

solaced ourselves on the cool grassy carpet during the warm sunny hours of mid-day. While lolling on the grass, indulging in that kind of musing reverie of which I am fond, I summoned up the dusky recollections of my boyhood respecting this place, and repeated them like the imperfectly remembered traces of a dream, for the amusement of my companions. When I had finished, a worthy old burgher, John Josse Vandermoere, the same who once related to me the adventures of Dolph Heyliger, broke silence, and observed, that he recollected a story of money-digging, which occurred in this very neighborhood, and might account for some of the traditions which I had heard in my boyhood. As we knew him to be one of the most authentic narrators in the province, we begged him to let us have the particulars, and accordingly, while we solaced ourselves with a clean long pipe of Blasc Moore's best tobacco, the authentic John Josse Vandermoere related the following tale.

WOLFERT WEBBER, OR GOLDEN DREAMS.

IN the year of grace one thousand seven hundred and—blank—for I do not remember the precise date; however, it was somewhere in the early part of the last century, there lived in the ancient city of the Manhattoes a worthy burgher, Wolfert Webber by name. He was descended from old Cobus Webber of the Brill in Holland, one of the original settlers, famous for introducing the cultivation of cabbages, and who came over to the province during the protectorship of Oloffe Van Kortlandt, otherwise called the Dreamer.

The field in which Cobus Webber first planted himself and his cabbages had remained ever since in the family, who continued in the same line of husbandry, with that praiseworthy perseverance for which our Dutch burghers are noted. The whole family genius, during several generations, was devoted to the study and development of this one noble vegetable; and to this concentration of intellect may doubtless be ascribed the prodigious renown to which the Webber cabbages attained.

The Webber dynasty continued in uninterrupted succession; and never did a line give more unquestionable

proofs of legitimacy. The eldest son succeeded to the looks, as well as the territory of his sire; and had the portraits of this line of tranquil potentates been taken, they would have presented a row of heads marvellously resembling in shape and magnitude the vegetables over which they reigned.

The seat of government continued unchanged in the family mansion :—a Dutch-built house, with a front, or rather gable-end of yellow brick, tapering to a point, with the customary iron weathercock at the top. Everything about the building bore the air of long-settled ease and security. Flights of martins peopled the little coops nailed against its walls, and swallows built their nests under the eaves ; and every one knows that these house-loving birds bring good luck to the dwelling where they take up their abode. In a bright summer morning in early summer, it was delectable to hear their cheerful notes, as they sported about in the pure sweet air, chirping forth, as it were, the greatness and prosperity of the Webbers.

Thus quietly and comfortably did this excellent family vegetate under the shade of a mighty button-wood tree, which by little and little grew so great as entirely to overshadow their palace. The city gradually spread its suburbs round their domain. Houses sprang up to interrupt their prospects. The rural lanes in the vicinity began to grow into the bustle and populousness of streets ; in short, with all the habits of rustic life they

began to find themselves the inhabitants of a city. Still, however, they maintained their hereditary character, and hereditary possessions, with all the tenacity of petty German princes in the midst of the empire. Wolfert was the last of the line, and succeeded to the patriarchal bench at the door, under the family tree, and swayed the sceptre of his fathers, a kind of rural potentate in the midst of the metropolis.

To share the cares and sweets of sovereignty, he had taken unto himself a helpmate, one of that excellent kind called stirring women; that is to say, she was one of those notable little housewives who are always busy where there is nothing to do. Her activity, however, took one particular direction: her whole life seemed devoted to intense knitting; whether at home or abroad, walking or sitting, her needles were continually in motion, and it is even affirmed that by her unwearied industry she very nearly supplied her household with stockings throughout the year. This worthy couple were blessed with one daughter, who was brought up with great tenderness and care; uncommon pains had been taken with her education, so that she could stitch in every variety of way; make all kinds of pickles and preserves, and mark her own name on a sampler. The influence of her taste was seen also in the family garden, where the ornamental began to mingle with the useful; whole rows of fiery marigolds and splendid hollyhocks bordered the cabbage-beds; and gigantic sunflowers lolled their broad

jolly faces over the fences, seeming to ogle most affectionately the passers-by.

Thus reigned and vegetated Wolfert Webber over his paternal acres, peacefully and contentedly. Not but that, like all other sovereigns, he had his occasional cares and vexations. The growth of his native city sometimes caused him annoyance. His little territory gradually became hemmed in by streets and houses, which intercepted air and sunshine. He was now and then subjected to the irruptions of the border population that infest the streets of a metropolis; who would make midnight forays into his dominions, and carry off captive whole platoons of his noblest subjects. Vagrant swine would make a descent, too, now and then, when the gate was left open, and lay all waste before them; and mischievous urchins would decapitate the illustrious sunflowers, the glory of the garden, as they lolled their heads so fondly over the walls. Still all these were petty grievances, which might now and then ruffle the surface of his mind, as a summer breeze will ruffle the surface of a mill-pond; but they could not disturb the deep-seated quiet of his soul. He would but seize a trusty staff, that stood behind the door, issue suddenly out, and anoint the back of the aggressor, whether pig or urchin, and then return within doors, marvellously refreshed and tranquillized.

The chief cause of anxiety to honest Wolfert, however, was the growing prosperity of the city. The expenses of living doubled and trebled; but he could not double and

treble the magnitude of his cabbages; and the number of competitors prevented the increase of price; thus, therefore, while every one around him grew richer, Wolfert grew poorer, and he could not, for the life of him, perceive how the evil was to be remedied.

This growing care, which increased from day to day, had its gradual effect upon our worthy burgher; insomuch, that it at length implanted two or three wrinkles in his brow; things unknown before in the family of the Webbers; and it seemed to pinch up the corners of his cocked hat into an expression of anxiety, totally opposite to the tranquil, broad-brimmed, low-crowned beavers of his illustrious progenitors.

Perhaps even this would not have materially disturbed the serenity of his mind, had he had only himself and his wife to care for; but there was his daughter gradually growing to maturity; and all the world knows that when daughters begin to ripen, no fruit nor flower requires so much looking after. I have no talent at describing female charms, else fain would I depict the progress of this little Dutch beauty. How her blue eyes grew deeper and deeper, and her cherry lips redder and redder; and how she ripened and ripened, and rounded and rounded in the opening breath of sixteen summers, until, in her seventeenth spring, she seemed ready to burst out of her bodice, like a half-blown rosebud.

Ah, well-a-day! could I but show her as she was then,

tricked out on a Sunday morning, in the hereditary finery of the old Dutch clothes-press, of which her mother had confided to her the key. The wedding-dress of her grandmother, modernized for use, with sundry ornaments, handed down as heirlooms in the family. Her pale brown hair smoothed with buttermilk in flat waving lines on each side of her fair forehead. The chain of yellow virgin gold, that encircled her neck: the little cross, that just rested at the entrance of a soft valley of happiness, as if it would sanctify the place. The—but, pooh!—it is not for an old man like me to be prosing about female beauty; suffice it to say, Amy had attained her seventeenth year. Long since had her sampler exhibited hearts in couples desperately transfixed with arrows, and true lovers' knots worked in deep blue silk; and it was evident she began to languish for some more interesting occupation than the rearing of sunflowers or pickling of cucumbers.

At this critical period of female existence, when the heart within a damsel's bosom, like its emblem, the miniature which hangs without, is apt to be engrossed by a single image, a new visitor began to make his appearance under the roof of Wolfert Webber. This was Dirk Waldron, the only son of a poor widow, but who could boast of more fathers than any lad in the province; for his mother had had four husbands, and this only child; so that though born in her last wedlock, he might fairly

claim to be the tardy fruit of a long course of cultivation. This son of four fathers united the merits and the vigor of all his sires. If he had not had a great family before him, he seemed likely to have a great one after him; for you had only to look at the fresh bucksome youth, to see that he was formed to be the founder of a mighty race.

This youngster gradually became an intimate visitor of the family. He talked little, but he sat long. He filled the father's pipe when it was empty, gathered up the mother's knitting-needle, or ball of worsted when it fell to the ground; stroked the sleek coat of the tortoise-shell cat, and replenished the tea-pot for the daughter from the bright copper kettle that sang before the fire. All these quiet little offices may seem of trifling import; but when true love is translated into Low Dutch, it is in this way that it eloquently expresses itself. They were not lost upon the Webber family. The winning youngster found marvellous favor in the eyes of the mother; the tortoise-shell cat, albeit the most staid and demure of her kind, gave indubitable signs of approbation of his visits; the tea-kettle seemed to sing out a cheering note of welcome at his approach; and if the sly glances of the daughter might be rightly read, as she sat bridling and dimpling, and sewing by her mother's side, she was not a whit behind Dame Webber, or grimalkin, or the tea-kettle, in good-will.

Wolfert alone saw nothing of what was going on. Pro-

foundly wrapt up in meditation on the growth of the city and his cabbages, he sat looking in the fire, and puffing his pipe in silence. One night, however, as the gentle Amy, according to custom, lighted her lover to the outer door, and he, according to custom, took his parting salute, the smack resounded so vigorously through the long, silent entry, as to startle even the dull ear of Wolfert. He was slowly roused to a new source of anxiety. It had never entered into his head that this mere child, who, as it seemed, but the other day had been climbing about his knees, and playing with dolls and baby-houses, could all at once be thinking of lovers and matrimony. He rubbed his eyes, examined into the fact, and really found that, while he had been dreaming of other matters, she had actually grown to be a woman, and what was worse, had fallen in love. Here arose new cares for Wolfert. He was a kind father, but he was a prudent man. The young man was a lively, stirring lad; but then he had neither money nor land. Wolfert's ideas all ran in one channel; and he saw no alternative in case of a marriage but to portion off the young couple with a corner of his cabbage-garden, the whole of which was barely sufficient for the support of his family.

Like a prudent father, therefore, he determined to nip this passion in the bud, and forbade the youngster the house; though sorely did it go against his fatherly heart, and many a silent tear did it cause in the bright eye of his daughter. She showed herself, however, a pattern

of filial piety and obedience. She never pouted and sulked; she never flew in the face of parental authority; she never flew into a passion, nor fell into hysterics, as many romantic novel-read young ladies would do. Not she, indeed! She was none such heroical rebellious trumpery, I'll warrant ye. On the contrary, she acquiesced like an obedient daughter, shut the street-door in her lover's face, and if ever she did grant him an interview, it was either out of the kitchen-window, or over the garden-fence.

Wolfert was deeply cogitating these matters in his mind, and his brow wrinkled with unusual care, as he wended his way one Saturday afternoon to a rural inn, about two miles from the city. It was a favorite resort of the Dutch part of the community, from being always held by a Dutch line of landlords, and retaining an air and relish of the good old times. It was a Dutch-built house, that had probably been a country seat of some opulent burgher in the early time of the settlement. It stood near a point of land called Corlear's Hook, which stretches out into the Sound, and against which the tide, at its flux and reflux, sets with extraordinary rapidity. The venerable and somewhat crazy mansion was distinguished from afar by a grove of elms and sycamores that seemed to wave a hospitable invitation, while a few weeping willows, with their dank, drooping foliage, resembling falling waters, gave an idea of coolness, that rendered it an attractive spot during the heats of summer.

Here, therefore, as I said, resorted many of the old inhabitants of the Manhattoes, where, while some played at shuffle-board and quoits and ninepins, others smoked a deliberate pipe, and talked over public affairs.

It was on a blustering autumnal afternoon that Wolfert made his visit to the inn. The grove of elms and willows was stripped of its leaves, which whirled in rustling eddies about the fields. The ninepin alley was deserted, for the premature chilliness of the day had driven the company within doors. As it was Saturday afternoon, the habitual club was in session, composed principally of regular Dutch burghers, though mingled occasionally with persons of various character and country, as is natural in a place of such motley population.

Beside the fireplace, in a huge leather-bottomed armchair, sat the dictator of this little world, the venerable Rem, or, as it was pronounced, Ramm Rapelye. He was a man of Walloon race, and illustrious for the antiquity of his line: his great-grandmother having been the first white child born in the province. But he was still more illustrious for his wealth and dignity: he had long filled the noble office of alderman, and was a man to whom the governor himself took off his hat. He had maintained possession of the leather-bottomed chair from time immemorial; and had gradually waxed in bulk as he sat in his seat of government, until in the course of years he filled its whole magnitude. His word was decisive with his subjects; for he was so rich a man that he was never

expected to support any opinion by argument. The landlord waited on him with peculiar officiousness; not that he paid better than his neighbors, but then the coin of a rich man seems always to be so much more acceptable. The landlord had ever a pleasant word and a joke to insinuate in the ear of the august Ramm. It is true, Ramm never laughed, and, indeed, ever maintained a mastiff-like gravity, and even surliness of aspect; yet he now and then rewarded mine host with a token of approbation; which, though nothing more nor less than a kind of grunt, still delighted the landlord more than a broad laugh from a poorer man.

"This will be a rough night for the money-diggers," said mine host, as a gust of wind howled round the house, and rattled at the windows.

"What! are they at their works again?" said an English half-pay captain, with one eye, who was a very frequent attendant at the inn.

"Aye, are they," said the landlord, "and well may they be. They've had luck of late. They say a great pot of money has been dug up in the fields, just behind Stuyvesant's orchard. Folks think it must have been buried there in old times, by Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor."

"Fudge!" said the one-eyed man of war, as he added a small portion of water to a bottom of brandy

"Well, you may believe it or not, as you please," said mine host, somewhat nettled; "but everybody knows

that the old governor buried a great deal of his money at the time of the Dutch troubles, when the English red-coats seized on the province. They say, too, the old gentleman walks; aye, and in the very same dress that he wears in the picture that hangs up in the family house."

"Fudge!" said the half-pay officer.

"Fudge, if you please!—But didn't Corney Van Zandt see him at midnight, stalking about in the meadow with his wooden leg, and a drawn sword in his hand, that flashed like fire? And what can he be walking for, but because people have been troubling the place where he buried his money in old times?"

Here the landlord was interrupted by several guttural sounds from Ramm Rapelye, betokening that he was laboring with the unusual production of an idea. As he was too great a man to be slighted by a prudent publican, mine host respectfully paused until he should deliver himself. The corpulent frame of this mighty burgher now gave all the symptoms of a volcanic mountain on the point of an eruption. First, there was a certain heaving of the abdomen, not unlike an earthquake; then was emitted a cloud of tobacco-smoke from that crater, his mouth; then there was a kind of rattle in the throat, as if the idea were working its way up through a region of phlegm; then there were several disjointed members of a sentence thrown out, ending in a cough; at length his voice forced its way into a slow, but absolute tone

of a man who feels the weight of his purse, if not of his ideas; every portion of his speech being marked by a testy puff of tobacco-smoke.

"Who talks of old Peter Stuyvesant's walking?—puff—Have people no respect for persons?—puff—puff—Peter Stuyvesant knew better what to do with his money than to bury it—puff—I know the Stuyvesant family—puff—every one of them—puff—not a more respectable family in the province—puff—old standards—puff—warm householders—puff—none of your upstarts—puff—puff—puff.—Don't talk to me of Peter Stuyvesant's walking—puff—puff—puff—puff."

Here the redoubtable Ramm contracted his brow, clasped up his mouth, till it wrinkled at each corner, and redoubled his smoking with such vehemence, that the cloudy volume soon wreathed round his head, as the smoke envelops the awful summit of Mount Ætna.

A general silence followed the sudden rebuke of this very rich man. The subject, however, was too interesting to be readily abandoned. The conversation soon broke forth again from the lips of Peechy Prauw Van Hook, the chronicler of the club, one of those prosing, narrative old men who seem to be troubled with an incontinence of words, as they grow old.

Peechy could, at any time, tell as many stories in an evening as his hearers could digest in a month. He now resumed the conversation, by affirming that, to his knowledge, money had, at different times, been digged up in

various parts of the island. The lucky persons who had discovered them had always dreamt of them three times beforehand, and what was worthy of remark, those treasures had never been found but by some descendant of the good old Dutch families, which clearly proved that they had been buried by Dutchmen in the olden time.

"Fiddlestick with your Dutchmen!" cried the half-pay officer. "The Dutch had nothing to do with them. They were all buried by Kidd the pirate, and his crew."

Here a key-note was touched that roused the whole company. The name of Captain Kidd was like a talisman in those times, and was associated with a thousand marvellous stories.

The half-pay officer took the lead, and in his narrations fathered upon Kidd all the plunderings and exploits of Morgan, Blackbeard, and the whole list of bloody buccaneers.

The officer was a man of great weight among the peaceable members of the club, by reason of his warlike character and gunpowder tales. All his golden stories of Kidd, however, and of the booty he had buried, were obstinately rivalled by the tales of Peechy Prauw, who, rather than suffer his Dutch progenitors to be eclipsed by a foreign freebooter, enriched every field and shore in the neighborhood with the hidden wealth of Peter Stuyvesant and his contemporaries.

Not a word of this conversation was lost upon Wolfert

Webber. He returned pensively home, full of magnificent ideas. The soil of his native island seemed to be turned into gold dust; and every field to teem with treasure. His head almost reeled at the thought how often he must have heedlessly rambled over places where countless sums lay, scarcely covered by the turf beneath his feet. His mind was in an uproar with this whirl of new ideas. As he came in sight of the venerable mansion of his forefathers, and the little realm where the Webbers had so long, and so contentedly flourished, his gorge rose at the narrowness of his destiny.

"Unlucky Wolfert!" exclaimed he; "others can go to bed and dream themselves into whole mines of wealth; they have but to seize a spade in the morning, and turn up doubloons like potatoes; but thou must dream of hardships, and rise to poverty,—must dig thy field from year's end to year's end, and yet raise nothing but cabbages!"

Wolfert Webber went to bed with a heavy heart; and it was long before the golden visions that disturbed his brain permitted him to sink into repose. The same visions, however, extended into his sleeping thoughts, and assumed a more definite form. He dreamt that he had discovered an immense treasure in the centre of his garden. At every stroke of the spade he laid bare a golden ingot; diamond crosses sparkled out of the dust; bags of money turned up their bellies, corpulent with pieces-of-eight, or venerable doubloons; and chests,

wedged close with moidores, ducats, and pistareens, yawned before his ravished eyes, and vomited forth their glittering contents.

Wolfert awoke a poorer man than ever. He had no heart to go about his daily concerns, which appeared so paltry and profitless; but sat all day long in the chimney-corner, picturing to himself ingots and heaps of gold in the fire. The next night his dream was repeated. He was again in his garden, digging, and laying open stores of hidden wealth. There was something very singular in this repetition. He passed another day of reverie, and though it was cleaning-day, and the house, as usual in Dutch households, completely topsy-turvy, yet he sat unmoved amidst the general uproar.

The third night he went to bed with a palpitating heart. He put on his red night-cap wrongside outwards, for good luck. It was deep midnight before his anxious mind could settle itself into sleep. Again the golden dream was repeated, and again he saw his garden teeming with ingots and money-bags.

Wolfert rose the next morning in complete bewilderment. A dream, three times repeated, was never known to lie; and if so, his fortune was made.

In his agitation he put on his waistcoat with the hind part before, and this was a corroboration of good luck. He no longer doubted that a huge store of money lay buried somewhere in his cabbage-field, coyly waiting to be sought for; and he repined at having so long been

scratching about the surface of the soil instead of digging to the centre.

He took his seat at the breakfast-table full of these speculations; asked his daughter to put a lump of gold into his tea, and on handing his wife a plate of slap-jacks, begged her to help herself to a doubloon.

His grand care now was how to secure this immense treasure without its being known. Instead of his working regularly in his grounds in the daytime, he now stole from his bed at night, and with spade and pickaxe went to work to rip up and dig about his paternal acres, from one end to the other. In a little time the whole garden, which had presented such a goodly and regular appearance, with its phalanx of cabbages, like a vegetable army in battle array, was reduced to a scene of devastation; while the relentless Wolfert, with night-cap on head, and lantern and spade in hand, stalked through the slaughtered ranks, the destroying angel of his own vegetable world.

Every morning bore testimony to the ravages of the preceding night in cabbages of all ages and conditions, from the tender sprout to the full-grown head, piteously rooted from their quiet beds like worthless weeds, and left to wither in the sunshine. In vain Wolfert's wife remonstrated; in vain his darling daughter wept over the destruction of some favorite marigold. "Thou shalt have gold of another guess sort," he would cry, chucking her under the chin; "thou shalt have a string of crooked

ducats for thy wedding necklace, my child." His family began really to fear that the poor man's wits were diseased. He muttered in his sleep at night about mines of wealth, about pearls and diamonds, and bars of gold. In the daytime he was moody and abstracted, and walked about as if in a trace. Dame Webber held frequent councils with all the old women of the neighborhood; scarce an hour in the day but a knot of them might be seen wagging their white caps together round her door, while the poor woman made some piteous recital. The daughter, too, was fain to seek for more frequent consolation from the stolen interviews of her favored swain, Dirk Waldron. The delectable little Dutch songs, with which she used to dulcify the house, grew less and less frequent, and she would forget her sewing, and look wistfully in her father's face as he sat pondering by the fireside. Wolfert caught her eye one day fixed on him thus anxiously, and for a moment was roused from his golden reveries. — "Cheer up, my girl," said he, exultingly; "why dost thou droop?—thou shalt hold up thy head one day with the Brinckerhoffs and the Schermerhorns, the Van Hornes, and the Van Dams. By Saint Nicholas, but the patroon himself shall be glad to get thee for his son!"

Amy shook her head at his vainglorious boast, and was more than ever in doubt of the soundness of the good man's intellect.

In the meantime Wolfert went on digging and digging; but the field was extensive, and as his dream had

indicated no precise spot, he had to dig at random. The winter set in before one-tenth of the scene of promise had been explored.

The ground became frozen hard, and the nights too cold for the labors of the spade.

No sooner, however, did the returning warmth of spring loosen the soil, and the small frogs begin to pipe in the meadows, but Wolfert resumed his labors with renovated zeal. Still, however, the hours of industry were reversed.

Instead of working cheerily all day, planting and setting out his vegetables, he remained thoughtfully idle, until the shades of night summoned him to his secret labors. In this way he continued to dig from night to night, and week to week, and month to month, but not a stiver did he find. On the contrary, the more he digged, the poorer he grew. The rich soil of his garden was digged away, and the sand and gravel from beneath was thrown to the surface, until the whole field presented an aspect of sandy barrenness.

In the meantime, the seasons gradually rolled on. The little frogs which had piped in the meadows in early spring, croaked as bull-frogs during the summer heats, and then sank into silence. The peach-tree budded, blossomed, and bore its fruit. The swallows and martins came, twitted about the roof, built their nests, reared their young, held their congress along the eaves, and then winged their flight in search of another spring.

The caterpillar spun its winding-sheet, dangled in it from the great button-wood tree before the house; turned into a moth, fluttered with the last sunshine of summer, and disappeared; and finally the leaves of the button-wood tree turned yellow, then brown, then rustled one by one to the ground, and whirling about in little eddies of wind and dust, whispered that winter was at hand.

Wolfert gradually woke from his dream of wealth as the year declined. He had reared no crop for the supply of his household during the sterility of winter. The season was long and severe, and for the first time the family was really straitened in its comforts. By degrees a revulsion of thought took place in Wolfert's mind, common to those whose golden dreams have been disturbed by pinching realities. The idea gradually stole upon him that he should come to want. He already considered himself one of the most unfortunate men in the province, having lost such an incalculable amount of undiscovered treasure, and now, when thousands of pounds had eluded his search, to be perplexed for shillings and pence, was cruel in the extreme.

Haggard care gathered about his brow; he went about with a money-seeking air, his eyes bent downwards into the dust, and carrying his hands in his pockets, as men are apt to do when they have nothing else to put into them. He could not even pass the city almshouse without giving it a rueful glance, as if destined to be his future abode.

The strangeness of his conduct and of his looks occasioned much speculation and remark. For a long time he was suspected of being crazy, and then everybody pitied him; and at length it began to be suspected that he was poor, and then everybody avoided him.

The rich old burghers of his acquaintance met him outside of the door when he called, entertained him hospitably on the threshold, pressed him warmly by the hand at parting, shook their heads as he walked away, with the kind-hearted expression of "poor Wolfert," and turned a corner nimbly if by chance they saw him approaching as they walked the streets. Even the barber and the cobbler of the neighborhood, and a tattered tailor in an alley hard by, three of the poorest and merriest rogues in the world, eyed him with that abundant sympathy which usually attends a lack of means; and there is not a doubt but their pockets would have been at his command, only that they happened to be empty.

Thus everybody deserted the Webber mansion, as if poverty were contagious, like the plague; everybody but honest Dirk Waldron, who still kept up his stolen visits to the daughter, and indeed seemed to wax more affectionate as the fortunes of his mistress were in the wane.

Many months had elapsed since Wolfert had frequented his old resort, the rural inn. He was taking a long lonely walk one Saturday afternoon, musing over his wants and disappointments, when his feet took instinctively their wonted direction, and on awaking out of

a reverie, he found himself before the door of the inn. For some moments he hesitated whether to enter, but his heart yearned for companionship; and where can a ruined man find better companionship than at a tavern, where there is neither sober example nor sober advice to put him out of countenance?

Wolfert found several of the old frequenters of the inn at their usual posts, and seated in their usual places; but one was missing, the great Ramm Rapelye, who for many years had filled the leather-bottomed chair of state. His place was supplied by a stranger, who seemed, however, completely at home in the chair and the tavern. He was rather under size, but deep-chested, square, and muscular. His broad shoulders, double joints, and bow knees, gave tokens of prodigious strength. His face was dark and weather-beaten; a deep scar, as if from the slash of a cutlass, had almost divided his nose, and made a gash in his upper lip, through which his teeth shone like a bull-dog's. A mop of iron-gray hair gave a grisly finish to this hard-favored visage. His dress was of an amphibious character. He wore an old hat edged with tarnished lace, and cocked in martial style, on one side of his head; a rusty blue military coat with brass buttons, and a wide pair of short petticoat trousers, or rather breeches, for they were gathered up at the knees. He ordered everybody about him with an authoritative air; talking in a brattling voice, that sounded like the crackling of thorns under a pot; d——d the landlord and

servants with perfect impunity, and was waited upon with greater obsequiousness than had ever been shown to the mighty Ramm himself.

Wolfert's curiosity was awakened to know who and what was this stranger who had thus usurped absolute sway in this ancient domain. Peechy Prauw took him aside, into a remote corner of the hall, and there, in an under voice, and with great caution, imparted to him all that he knew on the subject. The inn had been aroused several months before, on a dark stormy night, by repeated long shouts, that seemed like the howlings of a wolf. They came from the water-side, and at length were distinguished to be hailing the house in the sea-faring manner, "House-a-hoy!" The landlord turned out with his head waiter, tapster, hostler, and errand-boy,—that is to say, with his old negro Cuff. On approaching the place whence the voice proceeded, they found this amphibious-looking personage at the water's edge, quite alone, and seated on a great oaken sea-chest. How he came there, whether he had been set on shore from some boat, or had floated to land on his chest, nobody could tell, for he did not seem disposed to answer questions; and there was something in his looks and manners that put a stop to all questioning. Suffice it to say, he took possession of a corner-room of the inn, to which his chest was removed with great difficulty. Here he had remained ever since, keeping about the inn and its vicinity. Sometimes, it is true, he disappeared for one, two, or

three days at a time, going and returning without giving any notice or account of his movements. He always appeared to have plenty of money, though often of very strange outlandish coinage; and he regularly paid his bill every evening before turning in.

He had fitted up his room to his own fancy, having slung a hammock from the ceiling instead of a bed, and decorated the walls with rusty pistols and cutlasses of foreign workmanship. A greater part of his time was passed in this room, seated by the window, which commanded a wide view of the Sound, a short old-fashioned pipe in his mouth, a glass of rum-toddy at his elbow, and a pocket-telescope in his hand, with which he reconnoitred every boat that moved upon the water. Large square-rigged vessels seemed to excite but little attention; but the moment he descried anything with a shoulder-of-mutton sail, or that a barge, or yawl, or jolly-boat hove in sight, up went the telescope, and he examined it with the most scrupulous attention.

All this might have passed without much notice, for in those times the province was so much the resort of adventurers of all characters and climes, that any oddity in dress or behavior attracted but small attention. In a little while, however, this strange sea-monster, thus strangely cast upon dry land, began to encroach upon the long-established customs and customers of the place, and to interfere in a dictatorial manner in the affairs of the ninepin alley and the bar-room, until in the end

he usurped an absolute command over the whole inn. It was all in vain to attempt to withstand his authority. He was not exactly quarrelsome, but boisterous and peremptory, like one accustomed to tyrannize on a quarter-deck; and there was a dare-devil air about everything he said and did, that inspired wariness in all bystanders. Even the half-pay officer, so long the hero of the club, was soon silenced by him; and the quiet burghers stared with wonder at seeing their inflammable man of war so readily and quietly extinguished.

And then the tales that he would tell were enough to make a peaceable man's hair stand on end. There was not a sea-fight, nor marauding nor freebooting adventure that had happened within the last twenty years, but he seemed perfectly versed in it. He delighted to talk of the exploits of the buccaneers in the West Indies, and on the Spanish Main. How his eyes would glisten as he described the waylaying of treasure-ships, the desperate fights, yard-arm and yard-arm—broadside and broadside — the boarding and capturing huge Spanish galleons! With what chuckling relish would he describe the descent upon some rich Spanish colony; the rifling of a church; the sacking of a convent! You would have thought you heard some gormandizer dilating upon the roasting of a savory goose at Michaelmas as he described the roasting of some Spanish Don to make him discover his treasure,—a detail given with a minuteness that made every rich

old burgher present turn uncomfortable in his chair. All this would be told with infinite glee, as if he considered it an excellent joke; and then he would give such a tyrannical leer in the face of his next neighbor, that the poor man would be fain to laugh out of sheer faint-heartedness. If any one, however, pretended to contradict him in any of his stories, he was on fire in an instant. His very cocked hat assumed a momentary fierceness, and seemed to resent the contradiction. "How the devil should you know as well as I?—I tell you it was as I say;" and he would at the same time let slip a broadside of thundering oaths and tremendous sea-phrases, such as had never been heard before within these peaceful walls.

Indeed, the worthy burghers began to surmise that he knew more of those stories than mere hearsay. Day after day their conjectures concerning him grew more and more wild and fearful. The strangeness of his arrival, the strangeness of his manners, the mystery that surrounded him, all made him something incomprehensible in their eyes. He was a kind of monster of the deep to them—he was a merman—he was a behemoth—he was a leviathan—in short, they knew not what he was.

The domineering spirit of this boisterous sea-urchin at length grew quite intolerable. He was no respecter of persons; he contradicted the richest burghers without hesitation; he took possession of the sacred elbow-

chair, which, time out of mind, had been the seat of sovereignty of the illustrious Ramm Rapelye. Nay, he even went so far, in one of his rough jocular moods, as to slap that mighty burgher on the back, drink his toddy, and wink in his face, a thing scarcely to be believed. From this time Ramm Rapelye appeared no more at the inn; his example was followed by several of the most eminent customers, who were too rich to tolerate being bullied out of their opinions, or being obliged to laugh at another man's jokes. The landlord was almost in despair; but he knew not how to get rid of this sea-monster and his sea-chest, who seemed both to have grown like fixtures, or excrescences, on his establishment.

Such was the account whispered cautiously in Wolfert's ear, by the narrator, Peechy Prauw, as he held him by the button in a corner of the hall, casting a wary glance now and then towards the door of the bar-room, lest he should be overheard by the terrible hero of his tale.

Wolfert took his seat in a remote part of the room in silence; impressed with profound awe of this unknown, so versed in freebooting history. It was to him a wonderful instance of the revolutions of mighty empires, to find the venerable Ramm Rapelye thus ousted from the throne, and a rugged tarpauling dictating from his elbow-chair, hectoring the patriarchs, and filling this tranquil little realm with brawl and bravado.

The stranger was on this evening in a more than usually communicative mood, and was narrating a number of astounding stories of plunderings and burnings on the high seas. He dwelt upon them with peculiar relish, heightening the frightful particulars in proportion to their effect on his peaceful auditors. He gave a swaggering detail of the capture of a Spanish merchantman. She was lying becalmed during a long summer's day, just off from the island which was one of the lurking-places of the pirates. They had reconnoitred her with their spy-glasses from the shore, and ascertained her character and force. At night a picked crew of daring fellows set off for her in a whale-boat. They approached with muffled oars, as she lay rocking idly with the undulations of the sea, and her sails flapping against the masts. They were close under the stern before the guard on deck was aware of their approach. The alarm was given; the pirates threw hand-grenades on deck, and sprang up the main chains, sword in hand.

The crew flew to arms, but in great confusion; some were shot down, others took refuge in the tops; others were driven overboard and drowned, while others fought hand to hand from the main-deck to the quarter-deck, disputing gallantly every inch of ground. There were three Spanish gentlemen on board with their ladies, who made the most desperate resistance. They defended the companion-way, cut down several of their assailants, and fought like very devils, for they were maddened by the

shrieks of the ladies from the cabin. One of the Dons was old, and soon dispatched. The other two kept their ground vigorously, even though the captain of the pirates was among their assailants. Just then there was a shout of victory from the main-deck. "The ship is ours!" cried the pirates.

One of the Dons immediately dropped his sword and surrendered; the other, who was a hot-headed youngster, and just married, gave the captain a slash in the face that laid all open. The captain just made out to articulate the words "no quarter."

"And what did they do with their prisoners?" said Peechy Prauw, eagerly.

"Threw them all overboard," was the answer. A dead pause followed the reply. Peechy Prauw sunk quietly back, like a man who had unwarily stolen upon the lair of a sleeping lion. The honest burghers cast fearful glances at the deep scar slashed across the visage of the stranger, and moved their chairs a little farther off. The seaman, however, smoked on without moving a muscle, as though he either did not perceive or did not regard the unfavorable effect he had produced upon his hearers.

The half-pay officer was the first to break the silence; for he was continually tempted to make ineffectual head against this tyrant of the seas, and to regain his lost consequence in the eyes of his ancient companions. He now tried to match the gunpowder tales of the stranger by others equally tremendous. Kidd, as usual, was his

hero, concerning whom he seemed to have picked up many of the floating traditions of the province. The seaman had always evinced a settled pique against the one-eyed warrior. On this occasion he listened with peculiar impatience. He sat with one arm akimbo, the other elbow on the table, the hand holding on to the small pipe he was pettishly puffing; his legs crossed; drumming with one foot on the ground, and casting every now and then the side-glance of a basilisk at the prosing captain. At length the latter spoke of Kidd's having ascended the Hudson with some of his crew to land his plunder in secrecy.

"Kidd up the Hudson!" burst forth the seaman, with a tremendous oath,—"Kidd never was up the Hudson!"

"I tell you he was," said the other. "Aye, and they say he buried a quantity of treasure on the little flat that runs out into the river, called the Devil's Dans Kammer."

"The Devil's Dans Kammer in your teeth!" cried the seaman. "I tell you Kidd never was up the Hudson. What a plague do you know of Kidd and his haunts?"

"What do I know?" echoed the half-pay officer. "Why, I was in London at the time of his trial; aye, and I had the pleasure of seeing him hanged at Execution Dock."

"Then, sir, let me tell you that you saw as pretty a fellow hanged as ever trod shoe-leather. Aye!" putting his face nearer to that of the officer, "and there was

many a land-lubber looked on that might much better have swung in his stead."

The half-pay officer was silenced; but the indignation thus pent up in his bosom glowed with intense vehemence in his single eye, which kindled like a coal.

Peechy Prauw, who never could remain silent, observed that the gentleman certainly was in the right. Kidd never did bury money up the Hudson, nor indeed in any of those parts, though many affirmed such to be the fact. It was Bradish and others of the buccaneers who had buried money; some said in Turtle Bay, others on Long Island, others in the neighborhood of Hell-gate. Indeed, added he, I recollect an adventure of Sam, the negro fisherman, many years ago, which some think had something to do with the buccaneers. As we are all friends here, and as it will go no further, I'll tell it to you.

"Upon a dark night many years ago, as Black Sam was returning from fishing in Hell-gate"—

Here the story was nipped in the bud by a sudden movement from the unknown, who laying his iron fist on the table, knuckles downward, with a quiet force that indented the very boards, and looking grimly over his shoulder, with the grin of an angry bear,—"Heark'ee, neighbor," said he, with significant nodding of the head, "you'd better let the buccaneers and their money alone,—they're not for old men and old women to meddle with. They fought hard for their money; they

gave body and soul for it; and wherever it lies buried, depend upon it he must have a tug with the devil who gets it!"

This sudden explosion was succeeded by a blank silence throughout the room. Peechy Prauw shrunk within himself, and even the one-eyed officer turned pale. Wolfert, who from a dark corner of the room had listened with intense eagerness to all this talk about buried treasure, looked with mingled awe and reverence at this bold buccaneer; for such he really suspected him to be. There was a chinking of gold and a sparkling of jewels in all his stories about the Spanish Main that gave a value to every period; and Wolfert would have given anything for the rummaging of the ponderous sea-chest, which his imagination crammed full of golden chalices, crucifixes, and jolly round bags of doubloons.

The dead stillness that had fallen upon the company was at length interrupted by the stranger, who pulled out a prodigious watch of curious and ancient workmanship, and which in Wolfert' eyes had a decidedly Spanish look. On touching a spring it struck ten o'clock; upon which the sailor called for his reckoning, and having paid it out of a handful of outlandish coin, he drank off the remainder of his beverage, and without taking leave of any one, rolled out of the room, muttering to himself, as he stamped up-stairs to his chamber.

It was some time before the company could recover from the silence into which they had been thrown. The

very footsteps of the stranger, which were heard now and then as he traversed his chamber, inspired awe.

Still the conversation in which they had been engaged was too interesting not to be resumed. A heavy thunder-gust had gathered up unnoticed, while they were lost in talk, and the torrents of rain that fell forbade all thoughts of setting off for home until the storm should subside. They drew nearer together, therefore, and entreated the worthy Peechy Prauw to continue the tale which had been so discourteously interrupted. He readily complied, whispering, however, in a tone scarcely above his breath, and drowned occasionally by the rolling of the thunder; and he would pause every now and then, and listen with evident awe, as he heard the heavy footsteps of the stranger pacing overhead.

The following is the purport of his story:

ADVENTURE OF THE BLACK FISHERMAN.

VERYBODY knows Black Sam, the old negro fisherman, or, as he is commonly called, Mud Sam, who has fished about the Sound for the last half century. It is now many years since Sam, who was then as active a young negro as any in the province, and worked on the farm of Killian Suydam on Long Island, having finished his day's work at an early hour, was fishing, one still summer evening, just about the neighborhood of Hell-gate.

He was in a light skiff; and being well acquainted with the currents and eddies, had shifted his station according to the shifting of the tide, from the Hen and Chickens to the Hog's Back, from the Hog's Back to the Pot, and from the Pot to the Frying-Pan; but in the eagerness of his sport he did not see that the tide was rapidly ebbing, until the roaring of the whirlpools and eddies warned him of his danger; and he had some difficulty in shooting his skiff from among the rocks and breakers, and getting to the point of Blackwell's Island. Here he cast anchor for some time, waiting the turn of the tide to enable him to return homewards. As the

night set in, it grew blustering and gusty. Dark clouds came bundling up in the west; and now and then a growl of thunder or a flash of lightning told that a summer storm was at hand. Sam pulled over, therefore, under the lee of Manhattan Island, and coasting along, came to a snug nook, just under a steep beetling rock, where he fastened his skiff to the root of a tree that shot out from a cleft, and spread its broad branches like a canopy over the water. The gust came scouring along; the wind threw up the river in white surges; the rain rattled among the leaves; the thunder bellowed worse than that which is now bellowing; the lightning seemed to lick up the surges of the stream; but Sam, snugly sheltered under rock and tree, lay crouching in his skiff, rocking upon the billows until he fell asleep. When he woke all was quiet. The gust had passed away, and only now and then a faint gleam of lightning in the east showed which way it had gone. The night was dark and moonless; and from the state of the tide Sam concluded it was near midnight. He was on the point of making loose his skiff to return homewards, when he saw a light gleaming along the water from a distance, which seemed rapidly approaching. As it drew near he perceived it came from a lantern in the bow of a boat gliding along under shadow of the land. It pulled up in a small cove, close to where he was. A man jumped on shore, and searching about with the lantern, exclaimed, "This is the place—here's the iron ring." The boat was then made

fast, and the man returning on board, assisted his comrades in conveying something heavy on shore. As the light gleamed among them, Sam saw that they were five stout desperate-looking fellows, in red woollen caps, with a leader in a three-cornered hat, and that some of them were armed with dirks, or long knives, and pistols. They talked low to one another, and occasionally in some outlandish tongue which he could not understand.

On landing they made their way among the bushes, taking turns to relieve each other in lugging their burden up the rocky bank. Sam's curiosity was now fully aroused; so leaving his skiff he clambered silently up a ridge that overlooked their path. They had stopped to rest for a moment, and the leader was looking about among the bushes with his lantern. "Have you brought the spades?" said one. "They are here," replied another, who had them on his shoulder. "We must dig deep, where there will be no risk of discovery," said a third.

A cold chill ran through Sam's veins. He fancied he saw before him a gang of murderers, about to bury their victim. His knees smote together. In his agitation he shook the branch of a tree with which he was supporting himself as he looked over the edge of the cliff.

"What's that?" cried one of the gang.—"Some one stirs among the bushes!"

The lantern was held up in the direction of the noise. One of the red-caps cocked a pistol, and pointed it to-

wards the very place where Sam was standing. He stood motionless—breathless; expecting the next moment to be his last. Fortunately his dingy complexion was in his favor, and made no glare among the leaves.

"'Tis no one," said the man with the lantern. "What a plague! you would not fire off your pistol and alarm the country!"

The pistol was uncocked; the burden was resumed, and the party slowly toiled along the bank. Sam watched them as they went; the light sending back fitful gleams through the dripping bushes, and it was not till they were fairly out of sight that he ventured to draw breath freely. He now thought of getting back to his boat, and making his escape out of the reach of such dangerous neighbors; but curiosity was all-powerful. He hesitated and lingered and listened. By and by he heard the strokes of spades.—"They are digging the grave!" said he to himself; and the cold sweat started upon his forehead. Every stroke of a spade, as it sounded through the silent groves, went to his heart; it was evident there was as little noise made as possible; everything had an air of terrible mystery and secrecy. Sam had a great relish for the horrible,—a tale of murder was a treat for him; and he was a constant attendant at executions. He could not resist an impulse, in spite of every danger, to steal nearer to the scene of mystery, and overlook the midnight fellows at their work. He crawled along cautiously, therefore, inch by inch; stepping with the

utmost care among the dry leaves, lest their rustling should betray him. He came at length to where a steep rock intervened between him and the gang; for he saw the light of their lantern shining up against the branches of the trees on the other side. Sam slowly and silently clambered up the surface of the rock, and raising his head above its naked edge, beheld the villains immediately below him, and so near, that though he dreaded discovery, he dared not withdraw lest the least movement should be heard. In this way he remained, with his round black face peering above the edge of the rock, like the sun just emerging above the edge of the horizon, or the round-cheeked moon on the dial of a clock.

The red-caps had nearly finished their work; the grave was filled up, and they were carefully replacing the turf. This done, they scattered dry leaves over the place. "And now," said the leader, "I defy the devil himself to find it out."

"The murderers!" exclaimed Sam, involuntarily.

The whole gang started, and looking up, beheld the round black head of Sam just above them. His white eyes strained half out of their orbits; his white teeth chattering, and his whole visage shining with cold perspiration.

"We're discovered!" cried one.

"Down with him!" cried another.

Sam heard the cocking of a pistol, but did not pause for the report. He scrambled over rock and stone,

through brush and brier; rolled down banks like a hedge-hog; scrambled up others like a catamount. In every direction he heard some one or other of the gang hemming him in. At length he reached the rocky ridge along the river; one of the red-caps was hard behind him. A steep rock like a wall rose directly in his way; it seemed to cut off all retreat, when fortunately he espied the strong cord-like branch of a grape-vine reaching half way down it. He sprang at it with the force of a desperate man, seized it with both hands, and being young and agile, succeeded in swinging himself to the summit of the cliff. Here he stood in full relief against the sky, when the red-cap cocked his pistol and fired. The ball whistled by Sam's head. With the lucky thought of a man in an emergency, he uttered a yell, fell to the ground, and detached at the same time a fragment of the rock, which tumbled with a loud splash into the river.

"I've done his business," said the red-cap to one or two of his comrades as they arrived panting. "He'll tell no tales, except to the fishes in the river."

His pursuers now turned to meet their companions. Sam, sliding silently down the surface of the rock, let himself quietly into his skiff, cast loose the fastening, and abandoned himself to the rapid current, which in that place runs like a mill-stream, and soon swept him off from the neighborhood. It was not, however, until he had drifted a great distance that he ventured to ply his

oars, when he made his skiff dart like an arrow through the strait of Hell-gate, never heeding the danger of Pot, Frying-Pan, nor Hog's Back itself: nor did he feel himself thoroughly secure until safely nestled in bed in the cockloft of the ancient farm-house of the Suydams.

Here the worthy Peechy Prauw paused to take breath, and to take a sip of the gossip tankard that stood at his elbow. His auditors remained with open mouths and outstretched necks, gaping like a nest of swallows for an additional mouthful.

"And is that all?" exclaimed the half-pay officer.

"That's all that belongs to the story," said Peechy Prauw.

"And did Sam never find out what was buried by the red-caps?" said Wolfert, eagerly, whose mind was haunted by nothing but ingots and doubloons.

"Not that I know of," said Peechy; "he had no time to spare from his work, and, to tell the truth, he did not like to run the risk of another race among the rocks. Besides, how should he recollect the spot where the grave had been digged? everything would look so different by daylight. And then, where was the use of looking for a dead body, when there was no chance of hanging the murderers?"

"Aye, but are you sure it was a dead body they buried?" said Wolfert.

"To be sure," cried Peechy Prauw, exultingly. "Does it not haunt in the neighborhood to this very day?"

"Haunts!" exclaimed several of the party, opening their eyes still wider, and edging their chairs still closer.

"Aye, haunts," repeated Peechy; "have none of you heard of father Red-cap, who haunts the old burnt farm-house in the woods, on the border of the Sound, near Hell-gate?"

"Oh, to be sure, I've heard tell of something of the kind, but then I took it for some old wives' fable."

"Old wives' fable or not," said Peechy Prauw, "that farm-house stands hard by the very spot. It's been unoccupied time out of mind, and stands in a lonely part of the coast; but those who fish in the neighborhood have often heard strange noises there; and lights have been seen about the wood at night; and an old fellow in a red cap has been seen at the windows more than once, which people take to be the ghost of the body buried there. Once upon a time three soldiers took shelter in the building for the night, and rummaged it from top to bottom, when they found old father Red-cap astride of a cider-barrel in the cellar, with a jug in one hand and a goblet in the other. He offered them a drink out of his goblet, but just as one of the soldiers was putting it to his mouth—whew!—a flash of fire blazed through the cellar, blinded every mother's son of them for several minutes, and when they recovered their eye-sight, jug, goblet, and Red-cap had vanished, and nothing but the empty cider-barrel remained."

Here the half-pay officer, who was growing very muzzy

and sleepy, and nodding over his liquor, with half-extinguished eye, suddenly gleamed up like an expiring rushlight.

"That's all fudge!" said he, as Peechy finished his last story.

"Well, I don't vouch for the truth of it myself," said Peechy Prauw, "though all the world knows that there's something strange about that house and grounds; but as to the story of Mud Sam, I believe it just as well as if it had happened to myself.

The deep interest taken in this conversation by the company had made them unconscious of the uproar abroad among the elements, when suddenly they were electrified by a tremendous clap of thunder. A lumbering crash followed instantaneously, shaking the building to its very foundation. All started from their seats, imagining it the shock of an earthquake, or that old father Red-cap was coming among them in all his terrors. They listened for a moment, but only heard the rain pelting against the windows, and the wind howling among the trees. The explosion was soon explained by the apparition of an old negro's bald head thrust in at the door, his white goggle eyes contrasting with his jetty poll, which was wet with rain, and shone like a bottle. In a jargon but half intelligible, he announced that the kitchen-chimney had been struck with lightning.

A sullen pause of the storm, which now rose and sunk

in gusts, produced a momentary stillness. In this interval the report of a musket was heard, and a long shout, almost like a yell, resounded from the shores. Every one crowded to the window; another musket-shot was heard, and another long shout, mingled wildly with a rising blast of wind. It seemed as if the cry came up from the bosom of the waters; for though incessant flashes of lightning spread a light about the shore, no one was to be seen.

Suddenly the window of the room overhead was opened, and a loud halloo uttered by the mysterious stranger. Several hailings passed from one party to the other, but in a language which none of the company in the bar-room could understand; and presently they heard the window closed, and a great noise overhead, as if all the furniture were pulled and hauled about the room. The negro servant was summoned, and shortly afterwards was seen assisting the veteran to lug the ponderous sea-chest down-stairs.

The landlord was in amazement. "What, you are not going on the water in such a storm?"

"Storm!" said the other, scornfully, "do you call such a sputter of weather a storm?"

"You'll get drenched to the skin,—you'll catch your death!" said Peechy Prauw, affectionately.

"Thunder and lightning!" exclaimed the veteran, "don't preach about weather to a man that has cruised in whirlwinds and tornadoes."

The obsequious Peechy was again struck dumb. The voice from the water was heard once more in a tone of impatience; the by-standers stared with redoubled awe at this man of storms, who seemed to have come up out of the deep, and to be summoned back to it again. As, with the assistance of the negro, he slowly bore his ponderous sea-chest towards the shore, they eyed it with a superstitious feeling,—half doubting whether he were not really about to embark upon it and launch forth upon the wild waves. They followed him at a distance with a lantern.

"Dowse the light!" roared the hoarse voice from the water. "No one wants light here!"

"Thunder and lightning!" exclaimed the veteran, turning short upon them; "back to the house with you!"

Wolfert and his companions shrunk back in dismay. Still their curiosity would not allow them entirely to withdraw. A long sheet of lightning now flickered across the waves, and discovered a boat, filled with men, just under a rocky point, rising and sinking with the heaving surges, and swashing the waters at every heave. It was with difficulty held to the rocks by a boathook, for the current rushed furiously round the point. The veteran hoisted one end of the lumbering sea-chest on the gunwale of the boat, and seized the handle at the other end to lift it in, when the motion propelled the boat from the shore; the chest slipped off from the gunwale, and, sinking into the waves, pulled the veteran headlong after it. A loud shriek was uttered by all on shore, and a volley

of execrations by those on board; but boat and man were hurried away by the rushing swiftness of the tide. A pitchy darkness succeeded; Wolfert Webber indeed fancied that he distinguished a cry for help, and that he beheld the drowning man beckoning for assistance; but when the lightning again gleamed along the water, all was void; neither man nor boat was to be seen; nothing but the dashing and weltering of the waves as they hurried past.

The company returned to the tavern to await the subsiding of the storm. They resumed their seats, and gazed on each other with dismay. The whole transaction had not occupied five minutes, and not a dozen words had been spoken. When they looked at the oaken chair, they could scarcely realize the fact that the strange being who had so lately tenanted it, full of life and Herculean vigor, should already be a corpse. There was the very glass he had just drunk from; there lay the ashes from the pipe which he had smoked, as it were, with his last breath. As the worthy burghers pondered on these things, they felt a terrible conviction of the uncertainty of existence, and each felt as if the ground on which he stood was rendered less stable by his awful example.

As, however, the most of the company were possessed of that valuable philosophy which enables a man to bear up with fortitude against the misfortunes of his neighbors, they soon managed to console themselves for the

tragic end of the veteran. The landlord was particularly happy that the poor dear man had paid his reckoning before he went; and made a kind of farewell speech on the occasion.

"He came," said he, "in a storm, and he went in a storm; he came in the night, and he went in the night; he came nobody knows whence, and he has gone nobody knows where. For aught I know he has gone to sea once more on his chest, and may land to bother some people on the other side of the world! Though it's a thousand pities," added he, "if he has gone to Davy Jones's locker, that he had not left his own locker behind him."

"His locker! St. Nicholas preserve us!" cried Peechy Prauw. "I'd not have had that sea-chest in the house for any money; I'll warrant he'd come racketing after it at nights, and making a haunted house of the inn. And, as to his going to sea in his chest, I recollect what happened to Skipper Onderdonk's ship on his voyage from Amsterdam.

"The boatswain died during a storm: so they wrapped him up in a sheet, and put him in his own sea-chest, and threw him overboard; but they neglected in their hurry-skurry to say prayers over him—and the storm raged and roared louder than ever, and they saw the dead man seated in his chest, with his shroud for a sail, coming hard after the ship; and the sea breaking before him in great sprays like fire; and there they kept scudding day after day, and night after night, expecting every mo-

ment to go to wreck; and every night they saw the dead boatswain in his sea-chest trying to get up with them, and they heard his whistle above the blasts of wind, and he seemed to send great seas mountain-high after them, that would have swamped the ship if they had not put up the dead-lights. And so it went on till they lost sight of him in the fogs off Newfoundland, and supposed he had veered ship and stood for Dead Man's Isle. So much for burying a man at sea without saying prayers over him."

The thunder-gust which had hitherto detained the company was now at an end. The cuckoo clock in the hall told midnight; every one pressed to depart, for seldom was such a late hour of the night trespassed on by these quiet burghers. As they sallied forth, they found the heavens once more serene. The storm which had lately obscured them had rolled away, and lay piled up in fleecy masses on the horizon, lighted up by the bright crescent of the moon, which looked like a little silver lamp hung up in a palace of clouds.

The dismal occurrence of the night, and the dismal narrations they had made, had left a superstitious feeling in every mind. They cast a fearful glance at the spot where the buccaneer had disappeared, almost expecting to see him sailing on his chest in the cool moonshine. The trembling rays glittered along the waters, but all was placid; and the current dimpled over the spot where he had gone down. The party huddled together in a

little crowd as they repaired homewards; particularly when they passed a lonely field where a man had been murdered; and even the sexton, who had to complete his journey alone, though accustomed, one would think, to ghosts and goblins, went a long way round, rather than pass by his own church-yard.

Wolfert Webber had now carried home a fresh stock of stories and notions to ruminate upon. These accounts of pots of money and Spanish treasures, buried here and there and everywhere, about the rocks and bays of these wild shores, made him almost dizzy. "Blessed St. Nicholas!" ejaculated he, half aloud, "is it not possible to come upon one of these golden hoards, and to make one's self rich in a twinkling? How hard that I must go on, delving and delving, day in and day out, merely to make a morsel of bread, when one lucky stroke of a spade might enable me to ride in my carriage for the rest of my life!"

As he turned over in his thoughts all that been told of the singular adventure of the negro fisherman, his imagination gave a totally different complexion to the tale. He saw in the gang of red-caps nothing but a crew of pirates burying their spoils, and his cupidity was once more awakened by the possibility of at length getting on the traces of some of this lurking wealth. Indeed, his infected fancy tinged everything with gold. He felt like the greedy inhabitant of Bagdad, when his eyes had been greased with the magic ointment of the dervise, that gave

him to see all the treasures of the earth. Caskets of buried jewels, chests of ingots, and barrels of outlandish coins, seemed to court him from their concealments, and supplicate him to relieve them from their untimely graves.

On making private inquiries about the grounds said to be haunted by Father Red-cap, he was more and more confirmed in his surmise. He learned that the place had several times been visited by experienced money-diggers, who had heard black Sam's story, though none of them had met with success. On the contrary, they had always been dogged with ill-luck of some kind or other, in consequence, as Wolfert concluded, of not going to work at the proper time, and with the proper ceremonials. The last attempt had been made by Cobus Quackenbos, who dug for a whole night, and met with incredible difficulty, for as fast as he threw one shovelful of earth out of the hole, two were thrown in by invisible hands. He succeeded so far, however, as to uncover an iron chest, when there was a terrible roaring, ramping, and raging of uncouth figures about the hole, and at length a shower of blows, dealt by invisible cudgels, fairly belabored him off of the forbidden ground. This Cobus Quackenbos had declared on his death-bed, so that there could not be any doubt of it. He was a man that had devoted many years of his life to money-digging, and it was thought would have ultimately succeeded, had he not died recently of a brain-fever in the almshouse.

Wolfert Webber was now in a worry of trepidation and

impatience; fearful lest some rival adventurer should get a scent of the buried gold. He determined privately to seek out the black fisherman, and get him to serve as guide to the place where he had witnessed the mysterious scene of interment. Sam was easily found; for he was one of those old habitual beings that live about a neighborhood until they wear themselves a place in the public mind, and become, in a manner, public characters. There was not an unlucky urchin about town that did not know Sam the fisherman, and think that he had a right to play his tricks upon the old negro. Sam had led an amphibious life for more than half a century, about the shores of the bay, and the fishing-grounds of the Sound. He passed the greater part of his time on and in the water, particularly about Hell-gate; and might have been taken, in bad weather, for one of the hobgoblins that used to haunt that strait. There would he be seen, at all times, and in all weathers; sometimes in his skiff, anchored among the eddies, or prowling like a shark about some wreck, where the fish are supposed to be most abundant. Sometimes seated on a rock from hour to hour, looking in the mist and drizzle, like a solitary heron watching for its prey. He was well acquainted with every hole and corner of the Sound; from the Wallabout to Hell-gate, and from Hell-gate unto the Devil's Stepping-Stones; and it was even affirmed that he knew all the fish in the river by their Christian names.

Wolfert found him at his cabin, which was not much

larger than a tolerable dog-house. It was rudely constructed of fragments of wrecks and drift-wood, and built on the rocky shore, at the foot of the old fort, just about what at present forms the point of the Battery. A "very ancient and fish-like smell" pervaded the place. Oars, paddles, and fishing-rods were leaning against the wall of the fort; a net was spread on the sand to dry; a skiff was drawn up on the beach; and at the door of his cabin was Mud Sam himself, indulging in the true negro luxury of sleeping in the sunshine.

Many years had passed away since the time of Sam's youthful adventure, and the snows of many a winter had grizzled the knotty wool upon his head. He perfectly recollected the circumstances, however, for he had often been called upon to relate them, though in his version of the story he differed in many points from Peechy Prauw; as is not unfrequently the case with authentic historians. As to the subsequent researches of money-diggers, Sam knew nothing about them; they were matters quite out of his line; neither did the cautious Wolfert care to disturb his thoughts on that point. His only wish was to secure the old fisherman as a pilot to the spot; and this was readily effected. The long time that had intervened since his nocturnal adventure had effaced all Sam's awe of the place, and the promise of a trifling reward roused him at once from his sleep and his sunshine.

The tide was adverse to making the expedition by water, and Wolfert was too impatient to get to the land

of promise, to wait for its turning; they set off, therefore, by land. A walk of four or five miles brought them to the edge of a wood, which at that time covered the greater part of the eastern side of the island. It was just beyond the pleasant region of Bloomen-dael. Here they struck into a long lane, straggling among trees and bushes, very much overgrown with weeds and mullein-stalks, as if but seldom used, and so completely overshadowed as to enjoy but a kind of twilight. Wild vines entangled the trees and flaunted in their faces; brambles and briers caught their clothes as they passed; the garter-snake glided across their path; the spotted toad hopped and waddled before them, and the restless cat-bird mewed at them from every thicket. Had Wolfert Webber been deeply read in romantic legend, he might have fancied himself entering upon forbidden, enchanted ground; or that these were some of the guardians set to keep watch upon buried treasure. As it was, the loneliness of the place, and the wild stories connected with it, had their effect upon his mind.

On reaching the lower end of the lane, they found themselves near the shore of the Sound in a kind of amphitheatre, surrounded by forest-trees. The area had once been a grass-plot, but was now shagged with briers and rank weeds. At one end, and just on the river bank, was a ruined building, little better than a heap of rubbish, with a stack of chimneys rising like a solitary tower out of the centre. The current of the Sound rushed along

just below it; with wildly grown trees drooping their branches into its waves.

Wolfert had not a doubt that this was the haunted house of Father Red-cap, and called to mind the story of Peechy Prauw. The evening was approaching, and the light falling dubiously among the woody places, gave a melancholy tone to the scene, well calculated to foster any lurking feeling of awe or superstition. The night-hawk, wheeling about in the highest regions of the air, emitted his peevish, boding cry. The woodpecker gave a lonely tap now and then on some hollow tree, and the fire-bird * streamed by them with his deep-red plumage.

They now came to an enclosure that had once been a garden. It extended along the foot of a rocky ridge, but was little better than a wilderness of weeds, with here and there a matted rose-bush, or a peach or plum tree grown wild and ragged, and covered with moss. At the lower end of the garden they passed a kind of vault in the side of a bank, facing the water. It had the look of a root-house. The door, though decayed, was still strong, and appeared to have been recently patched up. Wolfert pushed it open It gave a harsh grating upon its hinges, and striking against something like a box, a rattling sound ensued, and a skull rolled on the floor. Wolfert drew back shuddering, but was reassured on being informed by the negro that this was a family vault, belong-

* Orchard Oriole.

ing to one of the old Dutch families that owned this estate; an assertion corroborated by the sight of coffins of various sizes piled within. Sam had been familiar with all these scenes when a boy, and now knew that he could not be far from the place of which they were in quest.

They now made their way to the water's edge, scrambling along ledges of rocks that overhung the waves, and obliged often to hold by shrubs and grape-vines to avoid slipping into the deep and hurried stream. At length they came to a small cove, or rather indent of the shore. It was protected by steep rocks, and overshadowed by a thick copse of oaks and chestnuts, so as to be sheltered and almost concealed. The beach shelved gradually within the cove, but the current swept deep, and black, and rapid, along its jutting points. The negro paused; raised his remnant of a hat, and scratched his grizzled poll for a moment, as he regarded this nook; then suddenly clapping his hands, he stepped exultingly forward, and pointed to a large iron ring, stapled firmly in the rock, just where a broad shelf of stone furnished a commodious landing-place. It was the very spot where the red-caps had landed. Years had changed the more perishable features of the scene; but rock and iron yield slowly to the influence of time. On looking more closely, Wolfert remarked three crosses cut in the rock just above the ring, which had no doubt some mysterious signification. Old Sam now readily recognized the overhanging rock under which his skiff had been sheltered

during the thunder-gust. To follow up the course which the midnight gang had taken, however, was a harder task. His mind had been so much taken up on that eventful occasion by the persons of the drama, as to pay but little attention to the scenes; and these places look so different by night and day. After wandering about for some time, however, they came to an opening among the trees which Sam thought resembled the place. There was a ledge of rock of moderate height like a wall on one side, which he thought might be the very ridge whence he had overlooked the diggers. Wolfert examined it narrowly, and at length discovered three crosses similar to those on the above ring, cut deeply into the face of the rock, but nearly obliterated by moss that had grown over them. His heart leaped with joy, for he doubted not they were the private marks of the buccaneers. All now that remained was to ascertain the precise spot where the treasure lay buried; for otherwise he might dig at random in the neighborhood of the crosses, without coming upon the spoils, and he had already had enough of such profitless labor. Here, however, the old negro was perfectly at a loss, and indeed perplexed him by a variety of opinions; for his recollections were all confused. Sometimes he declared it must have been at the foot of a mulberry-tree hard by; then beside a great white stone; then under a small green knoll, a short distance from the ledge of rocks; until at length Wolfert became as bewildered as himself.

The shadows of evening were now spreading themselves over the woods, and rock and tree began to mingle together. It was evidently too late to attempt anything farther at present; and, indeed, Wolfert had come unprovided with implements to prosecute his researches. Satisfied, therefore, with having ascertained the place, he took note of all its landmarks, that he might recognize it again, and set out on his return homewards, resolved to prosecute this golden enterprise without delay.

The leading anxiety which had hitherto absorbed every feeling, being now in some measure appeased, fancy began to wander, and to conjure up a thousand shapes and chimeras as he returned through this haunted region. Pirates hanging in chains seemed to swing from every tree, and he almost expected to see some Spanish Don, with his throat cut from ear to ear, rising slowly out of the ground, and shaking the ghost of a money-bag.

Their way back lay through the desolate garden, and Wolfert's nerves had arrived at so sensitive a state that the flitting of a bird, the rustling of a leaf, or the falling of a nut, was enough to startle him. As they entered the confines of the garden, they caught sight of a figure at a distance advancing slowly up one of the walks, and bending under the weight of a burden. They paused and regarded him attentively. He wore what appeared to be a woollen cap, and, still more alarming, of a most sanguinary red.

The figure moved slowly on, ascended the bank, and stopped at the very door of the sepulchral vault. Just before entering it he looked around. What was the affright of Wolfert when he recognized the grisly visage of the drowned buccaneer! He uttered an ejaculation of horror. The figure slowly raised his iron fist, and shook it with a terrible menace. Wolfert did not pause to see any more, but hurried off as fast as his legs could carry him, nor was Sam slow in following at his heels, having all his ancient terrors revived. Away, then, did they scramble through bush and brake, horribly frightened at every bramble that tugged at their skirts, nor did they pause to breathe, until they had blundered their way through this perilous wood, and fairly reached the high road to the city.

Several days elapsed before Wolfert could summon courage enough to prosecute the enterprise, so much had he been dismayed by the apparition, whether living or dead, of the grisly buccaneer. In the meantime, what a conflict of mind did he suffer! He neglected all his concerns, was moody and restless all day, lost his appetite, wandered in his thoughts and words, and committed a thousand blunders. His rest was broken; and when he fell asleep, the nightmare, in shape of a huge money-bag, sat squatted upon his breast. He babbled about incalculable sums; fancied himself engaged in money-digging; threw the bedclothes right and left, in the idea that he was shovelling away the dirt; groped

under the bed in quest of the treasure, and lugged forth, as he supposed an inestimable pot of gold.

Dame Webber and her daughter were in despair at what they conceived a returning touch of insanity. There are two family oracles, one or other of which Dutch housewives consult in all cases of great doubt and perplexity—the dominie and the doctor. In the present instance they repaired to the doctor. There was at that time a little dark mouldy man of medicine, famous among the old wives of the Manhattoes for his skill, not only in the healing art, but in all matters of strange and mysterious nature. His name was Dr. Knipperhausen, but he was more commonly known by the appellation of the High-German Doctor.* To him did the poor women repair for counsel and assistance touching the mental vagaries of Wolfert Webber.

They found the doctor seated in his little study, clad in his dark camlet robe of knowledge, with his black velvet cap; after the manner of Boerhaave, Van Helmont, and other medical sages; a pair of green spectacles set in black horn upon his clubbed nose, and poring over a German folio that reflected back the darkness of his physiognomy. The doctor listened to their statement of the symptoms of Wolfert's malady with profound attention; but when they came to mention his raving about buried money, the little man pricked up his

* The same, no doubt, of whom mention is made in the history of Dolph Heyliger.

ears. Also, poor women! they little knew the aid they had called in.

Dr. Knipperhausen had been half his life engaged in seeking the short cuts to fortune, in quest of which so many a long lifetime is wasted. He had passed some years of his youth among the Harz mountains of Germany, and had derived much valuable instruction from the miners, touching the mode of seeking treasure buried in the earth. He had prosecuted his studies also under a travelling sage who united the mysteries of medicine with magic and legerdemain. His mind therefore had become stored with all kinds of mystic lore; he had dabbled a little in astrology, alchemy, divination; knew how to detect stolen money, and to tell where springs of water lay hidden; in a word, by the dark nature of his knowledge he had acquired the name of the High-German Doctor, which is pretty nearly equivalent to that of necromancer. The doctor had often heard rumors of treasure being buried in various parts of the island, and had long been anxious to get on the traces of it. No sooner were Wolfert's waking and sleeping vagaries confided to him, than he beheld in them the confirmed symptoms of a case of money-digging, and lost no time in probing it to the bottom. Wolfert had long been sorely oppressed in mind by the golden secret, and as a family physician is a kind of father confessor, he was glad of any opportunity of unburdening himself. So far from curing, the doctor caught the malady from his

patient. The circumstances unfolded to him awakened all his cupidity; he had not a doubt of money being buried somewhere in the neighborhood of the mysterious crosses, and offered to join Wolfert in the search. He informed him that much secrecy and caution must be observed in enterprises of the kind; that money is only to be digged for at night; with certain forms and ceremonies, and burning of drugs; the repeating of mystic words, and above all, that the seekers must first be provided with a divining rod, which had the wonderful property of pointing to the very spot on the surface of the earth under which treasure lay hidden. As the doctor had given much of his mind to these matters, he charged himself with all the necessary preparations, and, as the quarter of the moon was propitious, he undertook to have the divining rod ready by a certain night.*

* The following note was found appended to this passage in the handwriting of Mr. Knickerbocker. "There has been much written against the divining rod by those light minds who are ever ready to scoff at the mysteries of nature; but I fully join with Dr. Knipperhausen in giving it my faith. I shall not insist upon its efficacy in discovering the concealment of stolen goods, the boundary stones of fields, the traces of robbers and murderers, or even the existence of subterraneous springs and streams of water: albeit, I think these properties not to be readily discredited: but of its potency in discovering veins of precious metal, and hidden sums of money and jewels, I have not the least doubt. Some said that the rod turned only in the hands of persons who had been born in particular months of the year; hence astrologers had recourse to planetary influence when they would procure a talisman. Others declared that the properties of the rod were either an effect of chance, or the fraud of the holder, or the work of the devil. Thus saith the reverend father Kaspar Schott in his Treatise on Magic, 'Propter hæc et similia argumenta audacter ego

Wolfert's heart leaped with joy at having met with so learned and able a coadjutor. Everything went on secretly, but swimmingly. The doctor had many consultations with his patient, and the good woman of the household lauded the comforting effect of his visits. In the meantime the wonderful divining rod, that great key to nature's secrets, was duly prepared. The doctor had thumbed over all his books of knowledge for the occasion; and the black fisherman was engaged to take them in his skiff to the scene of enterprise; to work with spade and pickaxe in unearthing the treasure; and to freight his bark with the weighty spoils they were certain of finding.

At length the appointed night arrived for this perilous undertaking. Before Wolfert left his home he counselled his wife and daughter to go to bed, and feel no alarm if he should not return during the night. Like reasonable women, on being told not to feel alarm they fell immedi-

promisero vim conversivam virgulæ bifurcatæ nequaquam naturalem esse, sed vel casu vel fraude virgulam tractantis vel ope diaboli,' &c.

"Georg Agricola also was of opinion that it was a mere delusion of the devil to inveigle the avaricious and unwary into his clutches, and in his treatise 'de re Metallica,' lays particular stress on the mysterious words pronounced by those persons who employed the divining rod during his time. But I make not a doubt that the divining rod is one of those secrets of natural magic, the mystery of which is to be explained by the sympathies existing between physical things operated upon by the planets, and rendered efficacious by the strong faith of the individual. Let the divining rod be properly gathered at the proper time of the moon, cut into the proper form, used with the necessary ceremonies, and with a perfect faith in its efficacy, and I can confidently recommend it to my fellow-citizens as an infallible means of discovering the places on the Island of the Manhattoes where treasure hath been buried in the olden time. D. K."

ately into a panic. They saw at once by his manner that something unusual was in agitation; all their fears about the unsettled state of his mind were revived with tenfold force; they hung about him, entreating him not to expose himself to the night air, but all in vain. When once Wolfert was mounted on his hobby, it was no easy matter to get him out of the saddle. It was a clear starlight night, when he issued out of the portal of the Webber palace. He wore a large flapped hat tied under the chin with a handkerchief of his daughter's, to secure him from the night damp, while Dame Webber threw her long red cloak about his shoulders, and fastened it round his neck.

The doctor had been no less carefully armed and accoutred by his housekeeper, the vigilant Frau Ilsy; and sallied forth in his camlet robe by way of surcoat; his black velvet cap under his cocked hat, a thick clasped book under his arm, a basket of drugs and dried herbs in one hand, and in the other the miraculous rod of divination.

The great church-clock struck ten as Wolfert and the doctor passed by the church-yard, and the watchman bawled in hoarse voice a long and doleful "All's well!" A deep sleep had already fallen upon this primitive little burgh: nothing disturbed this awful silence, excepting now and then the bark of some profligate night-walking dog, or the serenade of some romantic cat. It is true, Wolfert fancied more than once that he heard the sound of a stealthy footfall at a distance behind them; but it

might have been merely the echo of their own steps along the quiet streets. He thought also at one time that he saw a tall figure skulking after them—stopping when they stopped, and moving on as they proceeded; but the dim and uncertain lamp-light threw such vague gleams and shadows, that this might all have been mere fancy.

They found the old fisherman waiting for them, smoking his pipe in the stern of the skiff, which was moored just in front of his little cabin. A pickaxe and spade were lying in the bottom of the boat, with a dark lantern, and a stone bottle of good Dutch courage, in which honest Sam no doubt put even more faith than Dr. Knipperhausen in his drugs.

Thus then did these three worthies embark in their cockle-shell of a skiff upon this nocturnal expedition, with a wisdom and valor equalled only by the three wise men of Gotham, who adventured to sea in a bowl. The tide was rising and running rapidly up the Sound. The current bore them along, almost without the aid of an oar. The profile of the town lay all in shadow. Here and there a light feebly glimmered from some sick-chamber, or from the cabin-window of some vessel at anchor in the stream. Not a cloud obscured the deep starry firmament, the lights of which wavered on the surface of the placid river; and a shooting meteor, streaking its pale course in the very direction they were taking, was interpreted by the doctor into a most propitious omen.

In a little while they glided by the point of Corlaer's Hook with the rural inn which had been the scene of such night adventures. The family had retired to rest, and the house was dark and still. Wolfert felt a chill pass over him as they passed the point where the buccaneer had disappeared. He pointed it out to Dr. Knipperhausen. While regarding it, they thought they saw a boat actually lurking at the very place; but the shore cast such a shadow over the border of the water that they could discern nothing distinctly. They had not proceeded far when they heard the low sounds of distant oars, as if cautiously pulled. Sam plied his oars with redoubled vigor, and knowing all the eddies and currents of the stream, soon left their followers, if such they were, far astern. In a little while they stretched across Turtle Bay and Kip's Bay, then shrouded themselves in the deep shadows of the Manhattan shore, and glided swiftly along, secure from observation. At length the negro shot his skiff into a little cove, darkly embowered by trees, and made it fast to the well-known iron ring. They now landed, and lighting the lantern, gathered their various implements and proceeded slowly through the bushes. Every sound startled them, even that of their own footsteps among the dry leaves; and the hooting of a screech owl, from the shattered chimney of the neighboring ruin, made their blood run cold.

In spite of all Wolfert's caution in taking note of the landmarks, it was some time before they could find the

open place among the trees, where the treasure was supposed to be buried. At length they came to the ledge of rock; and on examining its surface by the aid of the lantern, Wolfert recognized the three mystic crosses. Their hearts beat quick, for the momentous trial was at hand that was to determine their hopes.

The lantern was now held by Wolfert Webber, while the doctor produced the divining rod. It was a forked twig, one end of which was grasped firmly in each hand, while the centre, forming the stem, pointed perpendicularly upwards. The doctor moved this wand about, within a certain distance of the earth, from place to place, but for some time without any effect, while Wolfert kept the light of the lantern turned full upon it, and watched it with the most breathless interest. At length the rod began slowly to turn. The doctor grasped it with greater earnestness, his hands trembling with the agitation of his mind. The wand continued to turn gradually, until at length the stem had reversed its position, and pointed perpendicularly downward, and remained pointing to one spot as fixedly as the needle to the pole.

"This is the spot!" said the doctor, in an almost inaudible tone.

Wolfert's heart was in his throat.

"Shall I dig?" said the negro, grasping the spade.

"*Pots tausend*, no!" replied the little doctor, hastily. He now ordered his companions to keep close by him,

and to maintain the most inflexible silence. That certain precautions must be taken and ceremonies used to prevent the evil spirits which kept about buried treasure from doing them any harm. He then drew a circle about the place, enough to include the whole party. He next gathered dry twigs and leaves and made a fire, upon which he threw certain drugs and dried herbs which he had brought in his basket. A thick smoke rose, diffusing a potent odor, savoring marvellously of brimstone and assafœtida, which, however grateful it might be to the olfactory nerves of spirits, nearly strangled poor Wolfert, and produced a fit of coughing and wheezing that made the whole grove resound. Dr. Knipperhausen then unclasped the volume which he had brought under his arm, which was printed in red and black characters in German text. While Wolfert held the lantern, the doctor, by the aid of his spectacles, read off several forms of conjuration in Latin and German. He then ordered Sam to seize the pickaxe and proceed to work. The close-bound soil gave obstinate signs of not having been disturbed for many a year. After having picked his way through the surface, Sam came to a bed of sand and gravel, which he threw briskly to right and left with the spade.

"Hark!" said Wolfert, who fancied he heard a trampling among the dry leaves, and a rustling through the bushes. Sam paused for a moment, and they listened. No footstep was near. The bat flitted by them in

silence; a bird, roused from its roost by the light which glared up among the trees, flew circling about the flame. In the profound stillness of the woodland, they could distinguish the current rippling along the rocky shore, and the distant murmuring and roaring of Hell-gate.

The negro continued his labors, and had already digged a considerable hole. The doctor stood on the edge, reading formulæ every now and then from his black-letter volume, or throwing more drugs and herbs upon the fire; while Wolfert bent anxiously over the pit, watching every stroke of the spade. Any one witnessing the scene thus lighted up by fire, lantern, and the reflection of Wolfert's red mantle, might have mistaken the little doctor for some foul magician, busied in his incantations, and the grizzly-headed negro for some swart goblin, obedient to his commands.

At length the spade of the fisherman struck upon something that sounded hollow. The sound vibrated to Wolfert's heart. He struck his spade again.—

"'Tis a chest," said Sam.

"Full of gold, I'll warrant it!" cried Wolfert, clasping his hands with rapture.

Scarcely had he uttered the words when a sound from above caught his ear. He cast up his eyes, and lo! by the expiring light of the fire he beheld, just over the disk of the rock, what appeared to be the grim visage of the drowned buccaneer, grinning hideously down upon him.

Wolfert gave a loud cry, and let fall the lantern. His

panic communicated itself to his companions. The negro leaped out of the hole; the doctor dropped his book and basket, and began to pray in German. All was horror and confusion. The fire was scattered about, the lantern extinguished. In their hurry-scurry they ran against and confounded one another. They fancied a legion of hobgoblins let loose upon them, and that they saw, by the fitful gleams of the scattered embers, strange figures, in red caps, gibbering and ramping around them. The doctor ran one way, the negro another, and Wolfert made for the water side. As he plunged struggling onwards through brush and brake, he heard the tread of some one in pursuit. He scrambled frantically forward. The footsteps gained upon him. He felt himself grasped by his cloak, when suddenly his pursuer was attacked in turn: a fierce fight and struggle ensued—a pistol was discharged that lit up rock and bush for a second, and showed two figures grappling together—all was then darker than ever. The contest continued—the combatants clinched each other, and panted, and groaned, and rolled among the rocks. There was snarling and growling as of a cur, mingled with curses, in which Wolfert fancied he could recognize the voice of the buccaneer. He would fain have fled, but he was on the brink of a precipice, and could go no further.

Again the parties were on their feet; again there was a tugging and struggling, as if strength alone could decide the combat, until one was precipitated from the brow of

the cliff, and sent headlong into the deep stream that whirled below. Wolfert heard the plunge, and a kind of strangling, bubbling murmur, but the darkness of the night hid everything from him, and the swiftness of the current swept everything instantly out of hearing. One of the combatants was disposed of, but whether friend or foe, Wolfert could not tell, nor whether they might not both be foes. He heard the survivor approach, and his terror revived. He saw, where the profile of the rocks rose against the horizon, a human form advancing. He could not be mistaken: it must be the buccaneer. Whither should he fly!—a precipice was on one side—a murderer on the other. The enemy approached—he was close at hand. Wolfert attempted to let himself down the face of the cliff. His cloak caught in a thorn that grew on the edge. He was jerked from off his feet, and held dangling in the air, half choked by the string with which his careful wife had fastened the garment around his neck. Wolfert thought his last moment was arrived: already had he committed his soul to St. Nicholas, when the string broke, and he tumbled down the bank, bumping from rock to rock, and bush to bush, and leaving the red cloak fluttering like a bloody banner in the air.

It was a long while before Wolfert came to himself. When he opened his eyes, the ruddy streaks of morning were already shooting up the sky. He found himself grievously battered, and lying in the bottom of a boat.

He attempted to sit up, but was too sore and stiff to move. A voice requested him in friendly accents to lie still. He turned his eyes towards the speaker: it was Dirk Waldron. He had dogged the party, at the earnest request of Dame Webber and her daughter, who, with the laudable curiosity of their sex, had pried into the secret consultations of Wolfert and the doctor. Dirk had been completely distanced in following the light skiff of the fisherman, and had just come in to rescue the poor money-digger from his pursuer.

Thus ended this perilous enterprise. The doctor and Black Sam severally found their way back to the Manhattoes, each having some dreadful tale of peril to relate. As to poor Wolfert, instead of returning in triumph laden with bags of gold, he was borne home on a shutter, followed by a rabble-rout of curious urchins. His wife and daughter saw the dismal pageant from a distance, and alarmed the neighborhood with their cries; they thought the poor man had suddenly settled the great debt of nature in one of his wayward moods. Finding him, however, still living, they had him speedily to bed, and a jury of old matrons of the neighborhood assembled, to determine how he should be doctored. The whole town was in a buzz with the story of the money-diggers. Many repaired to the scene of the previous night's adventures: but though they found the very place of the digging, they discovered nothing that compensated them for their trouble. Some say they found the fragments

of an oaken chest, and an iron pot-lid, which savored strongly of hidden money; and that in the old family vault there were traces of bales and boxes: but this is all very dubious.

In fact, the secret of all this story has never to this day been discovered: whether any treasure were ever actually buried at that place; whether, if so, it were carried off at night by those who had buried it; or whether it still remains there under the guardianship of gnomes and spirits until it shall be properly sought for, is all matter of conjecture. For my part, I incline to the latter opinion; and make no doubt that great sums lie buried, both there and in other parts of this island and its neighborhood, ever since the times of the buccaneers and the Dutch colonists; and I would earnestly recommend the search after them to such of my fellow-citizens as are not engaged in any other speculations.

There were many conjectures formed, also, as to who and what was the strange man of the seas who had domineered over the little fraternity at Corlaer's Hook for a time; disappeared so strangely, and reappeared so fearfully. Some supposed him a smuggler stationed at that place to assist his comrades in landing their goods among the rocky coves of the island. Others, that he was one of the ancient comrades of Kidd or Bradish, returned to convey away treasures formerly hidden in the vicinity. The only circumstance that throws anything like a vague light on this mysterious matter, is a report

which prevailed of a strange foreign-built shallop, with much the look of a picaroon, having been seen hovering about the Sound for several days without landing or reporting herself, though boats were seen going to and from her at night: and that she was seen standing out of the mouth of the harbor, in the gray of the dawn, after the catastrophe of the money-diggers.

I must not omit to mention another report, also, which I confess is rather apocryphal, of the buccaneer, who was supposed to have been drowned, being seen before daybreak with a lantern in his hand, seated astride of his great sea-chest, and sailing through Hell-gate, which just then began to roar and bellow with redoubled fury.

While all the gossip world was thus filled with talk and rumor, poor Wolfert lay sick and sorrowfully in his bed, bruised in body and sorely beaten down in mind. His wife and daughter did all they could to bind up his wounds, both corporal and spiritual. The good old dame never stirred from his bedside, where she sat knitting from morning till night; while his daughter busied herself about him with the fondest care. Nor did they lack assistance from abroad. Whatever may be said of the desertion of friends in distress, they had no complaint of the kind to make. Not an old wife of the neighborhood but abandoned her work to crowd to the mansion of Wolfert Webber, to inquire after his health, and the particulars of his story. Not one came moreover without her little pipkin of pennyroyal, sage, balm, or other herb tea,

delighted at an opportunity of signalizing her kindness and her doctorship. What drenchings did not the poor Wolfert undergo, and all in vain! It was a moving sight to behold him wasting away day by day; growing thinner and thinner, and ghastlier and ghastlier, and staring with rueful visage from under an old patchwork counterpane, upon the jury of matrons kindly assembled to sigh and groan and look unhappy around him.

Dirk Waldron was the only being that seemed to shed a ray of sunshine into this house of mourning. He came in with cheery look and manly spirit, and tried to reanimate the expiring heart of the poor money-digger, but it was all in vain. Wolfert was completely done over. If anything was wanting to complete his despair, it was a notice served upon him in the midst of his distress, that the corporation were about to run a new street through the very centre of his cabbage-garden. He now saw nothing before him but poverty and ruin; his last reliance, the garden of his forefathers, was to be laid waste, and what then was to become of his poor wife and child?

His eyes filled with tears as they followed the dutiful Amy out of the room one morning. Dirk Waldron was seated beside him; Wolfert grasped his hand, pointed after his daughter, and for the first time since his illness, broke the silence he had maintained.

"I am going!" said he, shaking his head feebly, "and when I am gone—my poor daughter"——

"Leave her to me, father!" said Dirk, manfully,—"I'll take care of her!"

Wolfert looked up in the face of the cheery, strapping youngster, and saw there was none better able to take care of a woman.

"Enough," said he,—"she is yours!—and now fetch me a lawyer—let me make my will and die."

The lawyer was brought—a dapper, bustling, round-headed little man, Roorback (or Rollebuck as it was pronounced) by name. At the sight of him the women broke into loud lamentations, for they looked upon the signing of a will as the signing of a death-warrant. Wolfert made a feeble motion for them to be silent. Poor Amy buried her face and her grief in the bed-curtain. Dame Webber resumed her knitting to hide her distress, which betrayed itself however in a pellucid tear, which trickled silently down, and hung at the end of her peaked nose; while the cat, the only unconcerned member of the family, played with the good dame's ball of worsted, as it rolled about the floor.

Wolfert lay on his back, his night-cap drawn over his forehead; his eyes closed; his whole visage the picture of death. He begged the lawyer to be brief, for he felt his end approaching, and that he had no time to lose. The lawyer nibbed his pen, spread out his paper, and prepared to write.

"I give and bequeath," said Wolfert, faintly, "my small farm"——

"What—all!" exclaimed the lawyer.

Wolfert half opened his eyes and looked upon the lawyer.

"Yes—all," said he.

"What! all that great patch of land with cabbages and sun-flowers, which the corporation is just going to run a main street through?"

"The same," said Wolfert, with a heavy sigh, and sinking back upon his pillow.

"I wish him joy that inherits it!" said the little lawyer, chuckling, and rubbing his hands involuntarily.

"What do you mean?" said Wolfert, again opening his eyes.

"That he'll be one of the richest men in the place!" cried little Rollebuck.

The expiring Wolfert seemed to step back from the threshold of existence: his eyes again lighted up; he raised himself in his bed, shoved back his red worsted night-cap, and stared broadly at the lawyer.

"You don't say so!" exclaimed he.

"Faith, but I do!" rejoined the other.—"Why, when that great field and that huge meadow come to be laid out in streets, and cut up into snug building-lots—why, whoever owns it need not pull off his hat to the patroon!"

"Say you so?" cried Wolfert, half thrusting one leg out of bed, "why, then I think I'll not make my will yet!"

To the surprise of everybody the dying man actually

recovered. The vital spark, which had glimmered faintly in the socket, received fresh fuel from the oil of gladness, which the little lawyer poured into his soul. It once more burnt up into a flame.

Give physic to the heart, ye who would revive the body of a spirit-broken man! In a few days Wolfert left his room; in a few days more his table was covered with deeds, plans of streets, and building-lots. Little Rollebuck was constantly with him, his right-hand man and adviser; and instead of making his will, assisted in the more agreeable task of making his fortune. In fact Wolfert Webber was one of those worthy Dutch burghers of the Manhattoes whose fortunes have been made, in a manner, in spite of themselves; who have tenaciously held on to their hereditary acres, raising turnips and cabbages about the skirts of the city, hardly able to make both ends meet, until the corporation has cruelly driven streets through their abodes, and they have suddenly awakened out of their lethargy, and, to their astonishment, found themselves rich men.

Before many months had elapsed, a great bustling street passed through the very centre of the Webber garden, just where Wolfert had dreamed of finding a treasure. His golden dream was accomplished; he did indeed find an unlooked-for source of wealth; for, when his paternal lands were distributed into building-lots, and rented out to safe tenants, instead of producing a paltry crop of cabbages, they returned him an abundant

crop of rent; insomuch that on quarter-day it was a goodly sight to see his tenants knocking at the door, from morning till night, each with a little round-bellied bag of money, a golden produce of the soil.

The ancient mansion of his forefathers was still kept up; but instead of being a little yellow-fronted Dutch house in a garden, it now stood boldly in the midst of a street, the grand home of the neighborhood; for Wolfert enlarged it with a wing on each side, and a cupola or tea-room on top, where he might climb up and smoke his pipe in hot weather; and in the course of time the whole mansion was overrun by the chubby-faced progeny of Amy Webber and Dirk Waldron.

As Wolfert waxed old, and rich, and corpulent, he also set up a great gingerbread-colored carriage, drawn by a pair of black Flanders mares with tails that swept the ground; and to commemorate the origin of his greatness, he had for his crest a full-blown cabbage painted on the panels, with the pithy motto Alles Kopf, that is to say, ALL HEAD; meaning thereby that he had risen by sheer head-work.

To fill the measure of his greatness, in the fulness of time the renowned Ramm Rapelye slept with his fathers, and Wolfert Webber succeeded to the leather-bottomed arm-chair, in the inn-parlor at Corlaer's Hook; where he long reigned greatly honored and respected, insomuch that he was never known to tell a story without its being believed, nor to utter a joke without its being laughed at.

THE END.